Retail: $5.00

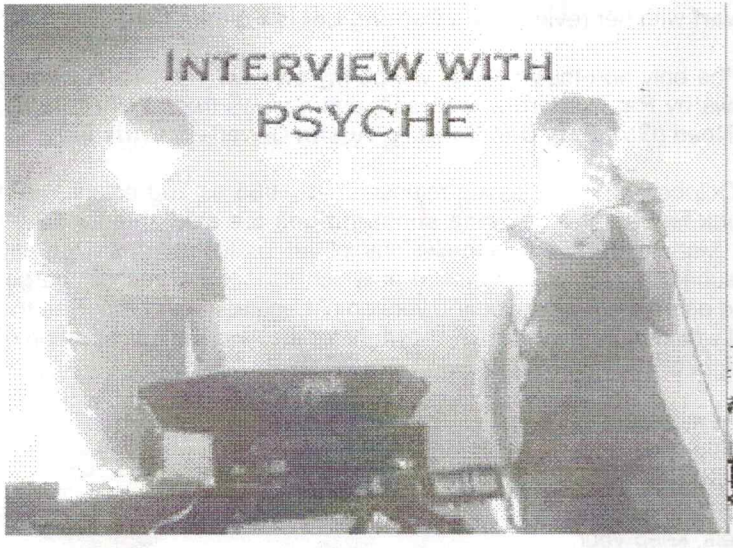
LEGENDS

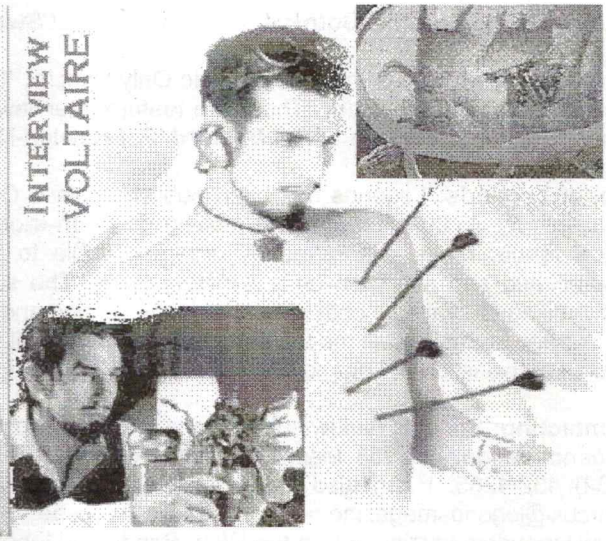
ISSUE #116
NOVEMBER, 2001

MUSIC ONLY
SPECIAL ISSUE

OVER 20 FULL-LENGTH
CD REVIEWS
THIS ISSUE!

THIS MONTH'S FEATURES





MIKE V'S MP3: THE MUSIC REVOLUTION

THE MEAN LITTLE MAN & ANTHRAX

THE PARKING LOT IS FULL
by Jack McLaren and Pat Spacek

AND AN UGLY B&W COVER BECAUSE I'M UNEMPLOYED!

Credits

EDITOR: Marcus Pan

COVER: Marcus Pan

ILLUSTRATORS: The Parking Lot is Full, Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)

WRITERS: J 'Hirez' H-R, Zubrovka, Mike Ventarola, The Mean Little Man, Rat Bastard, Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat), Dan Century, Austin Govella, Chris Eissing, Marcus Pan

---

Info

About the cover: I threw it together on a whim.

About the Illustrators: GothPat provides photos of **Swarf** with her review. **The Parking Lot Is Full** are here also.

About the writers: As this is the Music Only Special, the only non-music things will be my own *Off The Shelf* columns and **The Mean Little Man**. There are feature interviews by **Rat Bastard** and myself, and reviews from **J 'Hirez' H-R, Zubrovka, Mike Ventarola, Rat Bastard, Pat Hawles-Reed (GothPat), Dan Century, Austin Govella & Chris Eissing.**

About Legends: Legends has been published since October 1990. All issues released (#1 - #65 as 2nd editions) are available for $5.00 each to cover mailing costs. **In-stock issues and advance subscriptions are available for $3.00 each issue.** Make checks/money orders payable to Marcus Pan. Any submissions of art or literature are greatly appreciated and accepted on a donatory basis. The submitter receives the issue in which it appears free of charge. Advertising is available both in the hardcopy version and as banners on the online version of Legends Magazine. See the back page for rates. Call me for discount information. All writers and artists retain copyright for their work. The collection of such, i.e. this issue of Legends Magazine itself, is copyright © 2001 by Marcus Pan.

Contacting: Send all review submissions and other post materials to Legends Magazine, 158 Main St., South River, NJ, 08882. Or call (732) 432-4285. I can also be contacted via e-mail by writing to marcus@legendsmagazine.net. Come see us at www.legendsmagazine.net on the Web. Bands and labels, keep your new music coming. **Special consideration for new and indie artists!**

Buy Official Legends Merchandise Online at

www.cafepress.com/legendsmag

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEPARTMENTS & COLUMNS & COMICS:

Editor's Notes _____ Page 4
The Parking Lot is Full _____ Page 11
MP3: The Music Revolution _____ Page 19
The Mean Little Column – "Anthrax" _____ Page 27
The Parking Lot is (still?) Full _____ Page 33
Afterword _____ Page 42

FEATURE INTERVIEWS:

Psyche *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 6
Voltaire *by Rat Bastard* _____ Page 35

THE BIG PILE OF CD REVIEWS:

Holy Cow – "Purge" *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 4
Psyche – "Sanctuary" *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 9
Dream Disciples – "Asphyxia" *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 10
Rakit – "Rakit" *by J 'Hirez' H-R* _____ Page 11
The Azoic – "Forward…" *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 12
Locura – "10 Song DemoLITION" *by Rat Bastard* _____ Page 13
Scary Valentine – "Shades" *by Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)* _____ Page 13
x-Static Urge – "Annais" & "X-Static Urge" *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 14
The Flying Dutchman – "Trip to the Core" *by Zubrovka* _____ Page 15
The Flying Dutchman – "Pathfinder" *by J 'Hirez' H-R* _____ Page 16
V/A – "Blackend White Industrial Compilation *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 17
Laurent Brondel – "Weld" *by Zubrovka* _____ Page 23
Kuroi Mori – "Dawning" *by Mike Ventarola* _____ Page 24
Stereomud – "Pain : Old Man" *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 25
Swarf – "Fall" *by Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)* _____ Page 25
Byfist – "Adrenalin" *by Dan Century* _____ Page 29
Glampire – "Drop Dead Gorgeous" *by J 'Hirez' H-R* _____ Page 30
Absence of Faith – "The New Beginning" *by Chris Eissing* _____ Page 31
Darkness Enshroud – "Totentanz" *by Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)* _____ Page 31
Dawn Desiree – "Dawn Desiree" *by Mike Ventarola* _____ Page 32
Cult of the Psychic Fetus – "She Devil" *by Chris Eissing* _____ Page 34
Isis – "Disconnect" *by Austin Govella* _____ Page 41

OFF THE SHELF BOOK REVIEWS:

Fantasma *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 5
Candid, Zadig and Selected Stories *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 18
Prostho Plus *by Marcus Pan* _____ Page 41

EDITOR'S NOTES

We're taking the cheap route this month with a black and white cover since I'm dayjob hunting right now. Also, you probably noted that this month is all music. We're trying to catch up on submissions, which have been heavy. We might consider doing this again in the future if this issue goes well.

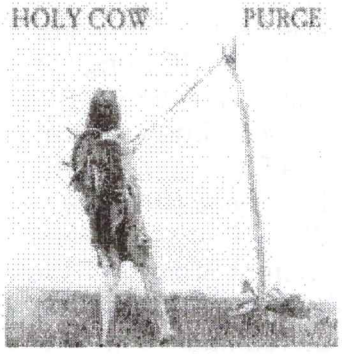
This month we have a feature exclusive interview with New York's Voltaire, done by Rat Bastard when they got together at the recent Convergence festival in New York City. You might know Voltaire's work both in art and music from MTV, and two releases from Projekt Records with a third to come. Also, I present another interview with Psyche, and we spend some time talking about their music including an upcoming CD from ArtOfFact Records.

Also, over twenty full length reviews. The Mean Little Column and Mike V's MP3 column appears along with my Off The Shelf book review series. So have at it.

Marcus Pan
October 28, 2001
3:33PM

REVIEW: HOLY COW – "PURGE"

By Marcus Pan



One of the strongest touring bands both through Europe and the United States, Holy Cow first hit the scene in 1985 and released **Call It What You Will** in 1986. Recently picked up by Neue Asthetik who released their latest LP, **Purge**, Holy Cow continue to produce older skool darkwave music blended with post-punk and experimental influences. Truly a darker sound and theme permeate the music of this group.

Besides the latest CD we're reviewing here in this article, and the first release of **Call It What You Will**, the history of the band includes more CDs such as **Suggested Reading** and **Soul Box** in 1989 and 1995 respectively. **Soul Box** is also available through Neue Asthetik at their online catalog in addition to **Purge**, of course.

Purge opens with *Dig*, with a heavy bass strum and very moody vocals. Surreal guitar pickings populate the track. An interestingly dark arrangement. The following track, *Outsider,* ups the bar with a heavier rhythm, but still keeps a very strong bass line. Vocals become more subdued and faded adding a stronger guitar riff over top. A definite stunner for the old-skool darkwavers. It's a bit repetitive in arrangement but holds a charm of its own for being a nice representation of the style of gothic rock that swept the UK in the past and later crossed the Atlantic.

You Get What You Deserve becomes slower and a bit more experimental rhythmically. Simplistic, slow, but powerful in its presentation. Holy Cow mix it up a bit throughout the album, but there is always the basic bass-driven rock style, dark and morbid atmospheric influences and solid if minimal arrangement. In tracks like *Dance of Torture* they may find themselves dipping with much success into post-punk styles with Jesus & Mary Chain being a close proximity to some of these more experimental tracks. One of their heavier post-punk tracks is indeed one of my favorites from the album - *The Desk* has strange explosive breakdowns, minimal yet heavy guitar and bass-heavy instrumentation with slightly distorted vocals. Chorus parts are strong and moving.

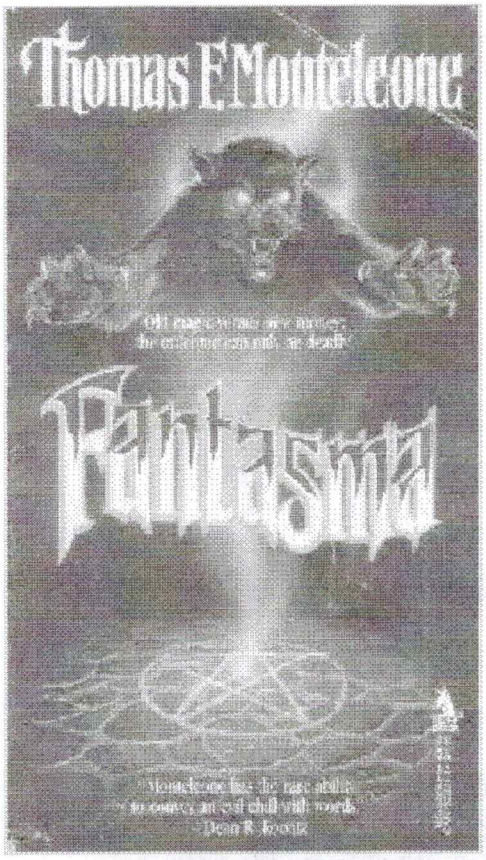
Random meanwhile takes a completely different tack, opening with acoustic guitar and untouched male vocals. A complete turn-around from the previous bass-heavy and rock tracks. It adds in the missing bass in short order, but retains a more laid-back setting with mixed in nuances of sound throughout. Another favorite is *Nub of Flesh*, a brooding track that returns to the clear darkwave influences that Holy Cow opened **Purge** with. They close on a similar note with *Drug*.

The end result is a great, older variety dark-rock or post-punk collection of tracks. Old skool Goths will definitely get into this, and most will find a lot of merit in the added experimentation within the nuances of the instrument arrangement. If you're wishing for a return to the older Bauhausian, Jesus & Mary Chain, Siouxsie (albeit male-voiced) style, then Holy Cow has your new *Drug*.

Contact Information:
Post: Neue Asthetik, P.O. Box 174, Murray Hill Station NY, NY, 10156
Phone: (212) 679-1287
E-Mail: info@asthetik.com
Web: http://www.asthetik.com

OFF THE SHELF – "FANTASMA"

By Marcus Pan



Riding the wave of cheesy horror in the mid-to-late 80s, Thomas F. Monteleone pushed out his mobster novel, *Fantasma*, on the tail end of the hullabaloo in 1989. Something of a cross between *The Godfather* (which I will be reading again and writing up in this column eventually) and *Poltergeist* (one of the few movies ever made that gave me nightmares), *Fantasma* is predictable and bland with a stack of cardboard cutouts for characters complete with bad dialogue and personality faults plainly visible on their sleeves.

The basis of the novel is nothing new. Sicilian mob families, the original mafia, utilized the skills of witch-women, called *stregas*, to wrench power through supernatural guidance. Pretty standard stuff here. If something really hairy goes down, these stregas can, at the Don's request, conjure up monsters that will go out and slice up whatever opponents the family has. Which begs the question, how can there still be so many families left in the novel? You'd figure that in old towns of Sicily the people would be regularly cleaning up monster turds off their sidewalk because of the regular appearance these things would make to gut each other's enemies.

The novel however is set in modern New York. A mob war breaks out, which is typically what happens in these sorts of things, and grandson of the mafia boss from the Gaetano family is packed up and shipped to an isolated estate in Sicily where he is to remain until the gunshots are over. At the estate there is a woman who is the fourth generation servant to the original family that owned the estate and, quite obviously, she is a *strega*. Suddenly, Vincenzo, our grandson and prime character, trades in his original personality somewhere and gets a new one based on vengeance and bloodlust, much like they do on soap operas. And off goes the *fantasma*, making nightly runs into enemy territory to tear tendrils of innards from the enemy family members. If only Corleone had this kind of thing, the wars would have been much quicker.

I did enjoy the scenes of massacre. These were quite well explained and very detailed. The graphic nature of them should satisfy most diehard blood lovers. The descriptions of the beast itself left much to be desired. Thomas couldn't decide on what the thing should look like, so he changed it at his whim using the old explanation that it matches the nightmare(s) of the victim. The ending was also very good, throwing one final nasty twist into the story that I quite liked before abruptly ending.

Overall, it kind of sucked. But it passed a boring day at a 4th of July picnic at least.

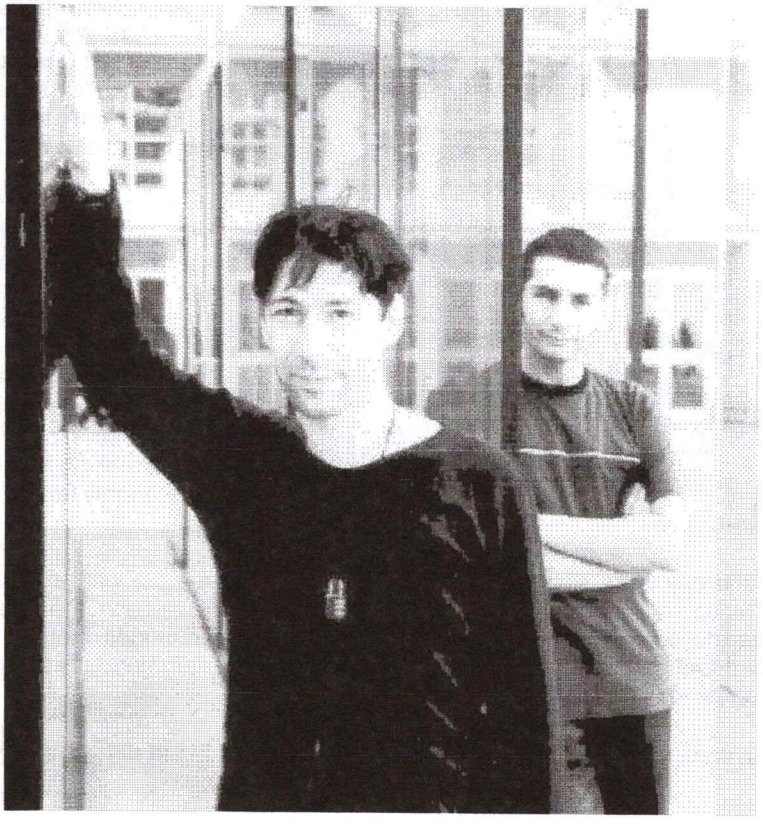
"Fantasma" by Thomas F. Monteleone
Published by Tom Doherty Associates, Inc.
Copyright © 1989 by Thomas F. Monteleone
ISBN: 0-812-52220-6

INTERVIEW: PSYCHE

By Marcus Pan

Canada can be proud. What once was the staple of Seattle's ADSR MusicWerks, or Detroit's DEC group and, if you want to go way back, Germany/Italy, has now spread to the north and in the form of Canada's ArtOfFact records comes out as the latest bastion in EBM and electronica music. One of the latest signings to the ArtOfFact label is Psyche – duo Darrin C. Huss and Per-Anders Kurenbach with ArtOfFact's first kick out from Psyche, and now the change of Remi Szyszka in 2000. For two decades now Psyche has been putting out smoothly blended tunes that showcase their uncanny ability to blend new wave, synthpop, trance, EBM and similar styles into music that runs the gamut from chill-out after-club tunes to dancefloor stompers. Latest releases since signing with ArtOfFact include the LP **Misguided Angels**, which I personally lauded as "an excellent release, and a good show for the band on this side of the Atlantic," with sounds that "keeps the old fans happy while infusing it with trance and modern EBM overtones, surely to make new and younger fans just as well off."[1] They followed up this quickly with EP **Sanctuary** and are still cranking out the tunes.

Darrin, beginning with brother Stephen, has been creating music under the Psyche moniker as early as 1982. Psyche, therefore, is about to hit two decades, and in another short year after that could even buy a beer in the U.S.! How have you kept yourself from getting bored with the project and what ways have you found yourself innovating to keep going while so many bands tire out after so long?



Well that word "project" is dangerous to use. Psyche is my life, and if I got bored with that then I guess I'd probably still come back as a ghost just to haunt all the wannabe's. But seriously there are moments where there's a lull in the development of synth music, and the most important thing is to try to break the rules again and again. Also we don't let ourselves get too straightforward in categorization; we are transgenre-ed!

Psyche has toured with an impressive collection of bands – Clan of Xymox, Alien Sex Fiend, Die Form, Suicide and many more. What are some of your most memorable live performances?'

All the big festivals we've had in Poland. This has really become a special second home to us since 1992, and now that Remi is on board it's more fun cause that's where he comes from. Psyche has mutated to a

[1] Legends #112, July 2001.

Page 6 – Copyright © 2001 by Marcus Pan. Copy but do not modify.

Canadian/Polish combination. I also love shows in Sweden because I like getting them all riled up and screaming for more over there. Remi found the Dark Rave in Toronto our best show in North America, and we both love France so our little one-off at La Locomotive in Paris was another great experience. I know I didn't mention Germany, but it's because since we live here it has become too familiar and so at the moment it's the concerts in other countries that are becoming more interesting.

The band has an impressive history of live performances. Which do you each prefer, or do you simply find that the nuances of studio vs. live are different yet with neither being preferred?

Live is my thing mainly. Studio is scarier because it's a one-time performance that lasts forever. But messing with effects and the building up of a song is still certainly a fine thing. I guess you could sum it up by saying I'd rather spend a month on stage than a month recording if I had the choice.

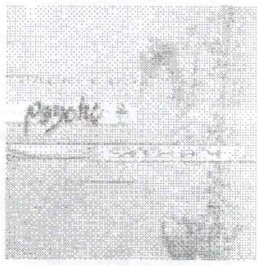
Also in the past Psyche has had other members that came on stage for performances. Is there a differing live line-up than there is for the studio?

No, there were only guest keyboarders involved from 1992-1995 when the original musician, my brother, wasn't available. All the concerts that we performed to the particular albums were given with the keyboarder who made that album.

Pers-Anders joined Darrin to form the line-up of Psyche in 1996. How did Darrin and Pers-Anders find each other and get together?

Well it's a bit sad to talk about it now that this period has ended, but basically as I knew that Psyche was not possible with my brother since 1994, I decided to look for a new start here in Germany. I've been living off and on in Germany since 1990. Stephen gave me his blessing as his involvement in the music industry was limited, and he also stayed in Canada. We never "split up." Anyway Per-Anders appeared at the suggestion of another singer I knew. We made some demos and I thought, yeah this could work. It did up until **Misguided Angels** but then I felt we'd already done our best and our **Love Among The Ruined** album was woefully ignored at the time. The "re:boot" with Remi took place in the beginning of 2000, and this is like a real long story, so suffice it to say a series of lucky accidents has kept Psyche on track regardless of setbacks until this very day. The Artoffact release of **Misguided Angels** summarizing the highpoints of all of Psyche's various stages in fact was exactly the release necessary to cross the bridge from 1998 to 2001 when things looked troubled.

Misguided Angels *marks the last of the tracks recorded by Darrin and Pers-Anders. Psyche continues on with the inclusion of Remi Szyszka.* ***Sanctuary*** *marks the first look at material from the new line-up. The full-length* ***The Hiding Place*** *is expected soon; when is it expected to be available? Will Art Of Fact be releasing any bonus tracks on it?*



The Hiding Place will be out on Artoffact by the time this interview is released. One remix exclusive to North America is added as a bonus. Also *The Outsider 2001* which was only available on the European CD single of **Sanctuary** is added to the Artoffact edition of our album.

How did Remi Szyszka step into the role of synths and sound design for Psyche in the new millennium?

He basically redefined the whole sound, made it much cleaner, more danceable and in fact somehow poppier, but without loosing the edge that makes us unique. He writes differently and is not so "80's oriented" as some people felt Psyche sometimes was. I think my voice has also gotten fuller and more concentrated through the directness of Remi's style.

Tell me a bit about the new material coming out with the new line-up. What kind of changes or innovations can we expect and are there any new directions that Psyche will be exploring in the future?

Well we're going for the clubs this time with *Sanctuary*, *Unbreakable*, *Renegades* and the title track, *The Hiding Place* leading the way. Other songs will be moodier and still retain the melancholy lyrics that I like to write as I examine my past. I feel there's a spiritual tone to the new album that provides a nice contrast to the energy driven beats and that's mainly because I'm no EBM vocalist. My inspiration comes from doing my damnedest to avoid industrial cliches. I think **The Hiding Place** will not be considered a mega innovative record, that'll have to follow once Remi and I have established us with this sound. After all it's my ninth official album, but his debut so we think it's more important just to have a solid collection of well recorded Psyche songs. In a way we just want to reconfirm what Psyche is, and then we'll see what kind of sounds and songwriting follows from here.

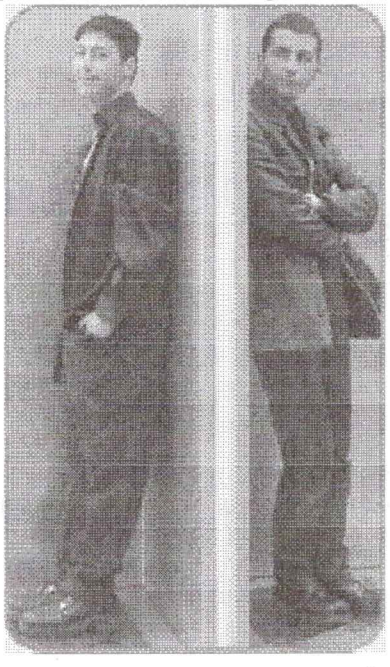
How did Darrin find himself singing for Inside? Inside disbanded not long after, two albums later – was this so Darrin could pursue Psyche further or was the continuation of Psyche never really left behind in the first place?

Psyche was never really left out of the picture, but again this explains that period between 1992-1996 where Psyche had no real new releases per se. Ironically Inside's debut, **Room Full Of Mirrors** was followed by Psyche's **Strange Romance**, and then came Psyche's **Love Among The Ruined** followed by INSIDE's **Beware**. So I was pretty busy, but sadly Inside just never really cut it and therefore Psyche once again survived.

These days everyone has a side project. Does Darrin and/or Remi have any side projects besides Psyche at this time?

In a way I hate that everyone has side projects. Especially when they're in the same genre. In my case they didn't work out in the end after all. I mean Psyche is what I'm known for so if I did a side project now it would be completely different music, but only if I felt the need for this. Sometimes I do, and I have appeared as a guest vocalist occasionally. I recently did two songs with a trance group called Sphere that'll be out soon. I've always felt that if you do something outside of your main group then obviously you're not getting what you want out of it. Psyche usually fulfills my needs, but when I feel too boxed into a category of a particular genre then I occasionally want to go somewhere else with my vocals. Remi had in fact also made a couple tracks with friends outside of Psyche, but again we have enough to do with Psyche and the occasional remix offer. I can't relate to those people who think that everything they do is so great they have to release it under five different band names.

Sex Dwarf is an amazing cover, and one you picked up specifically to perform live in Europe. What made you decide to go with this obscure song?



Obscure? That baby happens to be on a best-selling album of Soft Cell! But I know it's the more weirdo song from them for most people. I really did it in 1994 because I wanted to make a fun and sleazy club hit, and because everyone compares me with Marc Almond anyway! I chose to distort my vocals for the recording which I now regret a little. I sing it normally live and pay homage to Soft Cell within that song. I also like that this title is still somewhat decadent for the people despite all the scandal making groups of today.

*Another personal favorite from **Misguided Angels**; Goodbye Horses. Where did this come from? It's quite different from your usual electro and actually tends toward more of a storytelling atmosphere with a slower, new wave style.*

Goodbye Horses is the Q Lazzarus track featured in *Silence Of The Lambs*. That's a real obscurity in fact. But this is a cover. We have a special page on our website dedicated to the story of this song, and why we covered it. Although I didn't write it, it seems as if it was meant for us somehow, and is requested at every concert.

When you're not playing music, what are you two listening to during your down time?

Don't ask! No really we like all kinds of different things. In the electro genre, everything from Tangerine Dream to Haujobb. I like mainly what you'll see under the links of the Psyche website. Basically anything that isn't commercial Top 40.

Although there may be the occasional hit that we like. At the moment we're both more inspired by trance sounds, and atmospheric soundtracks like *Fight Club* and Remi likes the one for Coppola's *Dracula* as well. I like to download a lot of unknown artists from all kind of sources just to see what kind of stuff people out there are doing.

The Internet and entities such as MP3.com and Riffage.com have seemed to be a boon for independent and near-independent artists today. The promotions available with the Web are amazing. Do you take advantage of this or do you still tend to enjoy paper-based or more conventional forms of promotion?

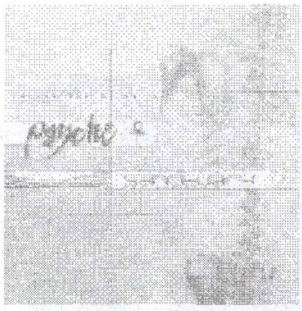
Well look at the lovely Loop.Tv mag's presentation for us under: http://www.corecom.net/geiger/pointcast/l44b1.htm. I don't know all the places to go yet because I do prefer if the people would just hear us or read about us directly from our record companies or from our website: www.psyche-hq.de. We love to do online magazines though!

How would fans contact you for more information? Is there a particular method, i.e. e-mail over a mailed letter, that you prefer?

I'm much more into the Internet, so I prefer email. We used to distribute a printed newsletter, but I gave up. I have a few people I write though cause still not everyone's "plugged into the matrix." We have a mail order service or contacts where people can get our CD's as well. We never added a forum; rather I have a guestbook on the site that people can say some stuff. I'm thinking of a forum, but it is very weird having people discussing you online where you can look or answer them as well. I'm not sure I'm into that cause then I might never find time to make music if I just chat with fans everyday! I do that enough already at concerts. I should say Psyche "listeners" as opposed to fans. It's not easy to change these standard industry formulas though. And there are times when an artist needs to keep a distance. My songs say quite enough I think. But that said, I love to be written to.

REVIEW: PSYCHE – "SANCTUARY"

By Marcus Pan



Heavy on the heels of their **Misguided Angels** CD[2], Darrin C. Huss and Per-Anders Kurenbach push out their mixed up EP, **Sanctuary**. Providing more of their excellent blend of EBM, synthpop, trance and new wave, to name a few, **Sanctuary** is a fine collection of music – albeit a little repetitive considering that *Sanctuary* appears seven times over in various forms and mixes. They also add a remix of *Misguided Angels* from their previous CD as well as new (to North America at least) track *Unbreakable*, the latter also mixed up in another version on this CD. Since you can refer to the previous **Misguided Angels** review for more information on Psyche themselves, as well as the exclusive interview in this issue, I'll drop right into the music.

Sanctuary is a fast, moving track with heavy bass, smooth melodies and vocals. *Unbreakable* is a bit more low-bro and not as invigorating, but nonetheless a good synthpop track. Following this is the *Negative Format* mix of *Sanctuary* – with grinding computeresque melodies and rhythmic pulsations and a definite progressive trance make-up. Vocals and lyrics become secondary with the drum'n'bass background meshing together with bubbly synthetic overtones becoming the forefront of the track. This is truly a "mix," and not just "another way it could sound" as some bands will put out claiming as a track remix. It's refreshingly different yet recognizable as *Sanctuary* and stands as a highlight to the **Sanctuary** release.

Also a lovely surprise was the *Headscan* remix of *Misguided Angels*, title track of Psyche's previous release which I lauded with much acclaim already. Taken the *Sanctuary* single even further, we also have the Implant, Massiv In Mensch, Icon of Coil, DJ Coon, Elektrohandel and Akanoid Vs. Clark Nova mixes of *Sanctuary* and another version of *Unbreakable* as well by Massiv In Mensch. All keep a similar EBM/synthpop/trance-like tone, but remain distanced from each other.

While admittedly, seven styles of the same song might be a bit much, at least you have a long string of trance-DJ material here for those that enjoy it. Which I can, when in the mood. I must give kudos to the *Logan's Run* samples in some of the latter examples of the track, however. "May you find sanctuary..." etc. is uncannily fitting.

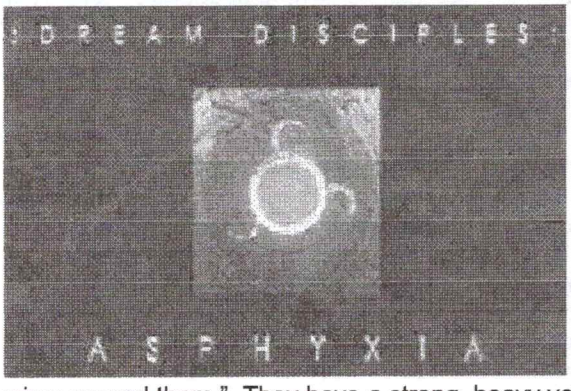
---

[2] Reviewed in Legends #112, July 2001.

Contact Information:
Post: 1057 Steeles Ave. W., P.O. Box 81630, Toronto, ON, M2R 3X1, Canada
E-Mail: artoffact@artoffact.com
Web: http://www.artoffact.com & http://www.psyche-hq.de

REVIEW: DREAM DISCIPLES – "ASPHYXIA"

By Marcus Pan



Dream Disciples are a band that went through many changes, but survived a nearly every-year line-up change since 1990. Their latest full length release, **Asphyxia**, is just out and available at many great distribution channels in Europe and abroad; Plastichead-UK and Metropolis-USA to name two. This of course means you should expect a great release from this UK based quartet. You are not disappointed.

Dream Disciples are a flashy-sounding, alternative rock quartet. Made up (currently) of Sid Bratley and Gordon Young on guitars, Karl North on bass guitar and Col Lowing singing (with some keyboards used for augmenting the sound). As I was listening one time I jotted down in my notes, "Reminds me of The Cure, only with a few barbed wires around them." They have a strong, heavy yet soothingly melodic sound to them that I really enjoy.

Previous Dream Disciples releases have been pouring out since 1991 beginning with **Veil of Tears** and even including a full length live album, **At the Edge of the Abyss**. Recorded at the Mercat in Birmingham, UK on December 10th, 1996. They also put out the 10 track **A Cure For Pain** in 1996 as well, but other than the **Sub Atomic** CD (EP, 1997) they were relatively quiet until this year. **Asphyxia** is a great release to step back out with. I haven't heard anything other of theirs yet, so I can't tell you how they've grown musically over the years, but I will tell you that I really enjoy **Asphyxia**.

Cobalt Blue is definitely one of my favorite tracks. A bit slower than the others with a sound that reminds me again of the Cure and also Tri State Killing Spree, Slow Lorries, etc. Throughout the CD you'll find that the four musicians in the group blend so strongly and complementary that the sound is powerful; it sounds like there should be more of them.

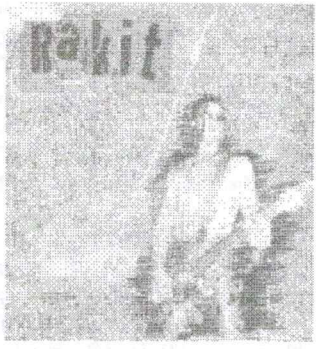
Black Widow meanwhile steps up the beats per minute and adopts a slightly electronic, dark and brooding sound. The song will break from EBM during stanzas and metal during choruses. A bit disconcerting, but I imagine it's damn fine in a pit. Opening punk-like, which was refreshing, *O.P.S.* is a great track. This is where the aforementioned barbed wire can turn into razor wire without the slightest hesitation – but still that smooth, melodic nature runs through. They close **Asphyxia** with *The Misery Whip*. Not the best track, but effectively closes the CD on a moody, dark note.

I welcome Dream Disciples, after a four year absence, back into the fray with a great release. I'll be adding this one to my personal collection because I like it that much. I'm sorry I haven't heard of them before. Check out their excellent website for more on these guys.

Contact Information:
E-Mail: band@dreamdisciples.net
Web: http://www.dreamdisciples.net, http://www.mp3.com/dreamdisciples

REVIEW: RAKIT – "RAKIT"

By J 'Hirez' H-R



Smells like corporate spirit. This is what we find: Crunchy guitars that are well controlled (like Sad Michael's wife, Bernie, who wrabbed his norman lunch). Random screechings from politely tortured machine tools. Distorted vocals. Pictures of one or more pouting prettyboys. Their lawyer's phone number.

Oh dear. It's corporate industra-rock by numbers. It's a great pity, because 'Rakit' is a fine name for a band – if they were an unruly mob who lurched around drunkenly on stage and gave the audience the impression that they'd set about each other if they managed to finish a song at the same time. But they're not. Rakit would appear to be another mostly-solo effort by one Vinny Rakit (kewl name, dude...) who ropes a couple of his better-looking mates in when there's live work to be done. This is the sountrack for stroppy, over-pierced teenagers with 'issues.'

Given that Rakit have been 'endorsed' (whatever that means) by Lip Service – I'm assuming a clothing firm here. I know little and care about as much of west coast US consumer durables – I'd guess that one would run the risk of being deafened by them while being sneered at by a different set of stroppy teenagers should one happen to venture into such emporia by accident.

I further note that they're on the soundtrack of some random film, have played at least one awards ceremony and seem to be actively seeking 'viral marketers.' (My words, not theirs. They call it something else, but if a band is advertising for 'street team members' one is bound to wonder just what the devil's going on.) You can call me a horrible old cynic, but this smells so strongly of Corporate Rawk it's unbelievable. Clearly concepts like 'image' and 'visibility' are uppermost in these people's minds and the music is just a necessary part of the 'package.' I bet they talk about 'product' as well.

The music? Oh, yes. Far too tidy. Polished to a sheen, even. There's one that goes loud-quiet-loud-quiet, one about why homelessness is bad, mmkay? And another about a woman what him wrong. Which, with the songs about anger and sharp objects, probably covers the entire spectrum of teen emotions.

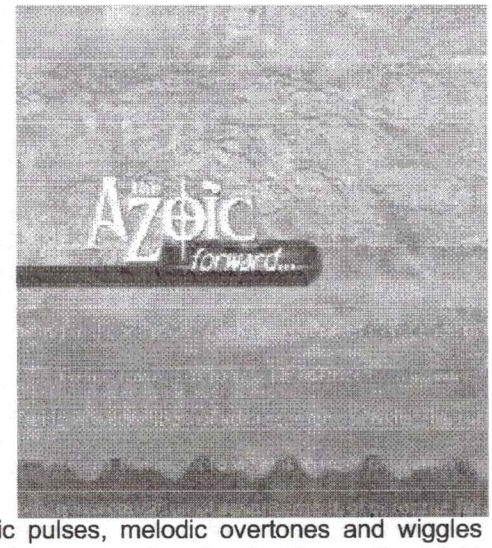
(With apologies to the estate of John Lennon for borrowing half a line from the poem 'Sad Michael' that can be found in the book 'In his own write,' which is a fine work and should be available from all good booksellers and most crap ones.)

THE PARKING LOT IS FULL
by Jack McLaren and Pat Spacek
http://www.plif.com
Oh wow... it's like I'm REALLY doing the dishes!
CRAY
vROS 2.2
VIRTUAL DISHES™
copyright © 2001 The Parking Lot is Full
Virtual Reality for the Stupid

Contact Information:
Phone: (323) 769-5140
E-Mail: mailroom@rakit.net
Web: http://www.rakit.net

REVIEW: THE AZOIC – "FORWARD..."

By Marcus Pan



Times are changing, and while Nilaihah is still one of the greatest darkwave labels out there, they are certainly growing strong as they begin to provide some great EBM as well. Take the latest release from Kristy Venrick, head of Nilaihah Records, of her own outfit The Azoic. The last time we've seen The Azoic in full force was three years ago in 1998 with their release of **Where Broken Angels Lie**[3]. Then they were compared to such greats as Mentallo and the Fixer, Wumpscut and others like them. But with a sinister edge.

The **Resistor**[4] compilation held a treat for those waiting to hear from them again in the form of *Progression*, a track from the new Azoic. I say new because The Azoic have stepped into an EBM sound, showing an amazing maturity in their music. The duo say that **Forward...** is the culmination of a "three year learning process and musical growth." They admit the band has "changed focus," but promise they "are still the unique and passionate band" that we knew from before.

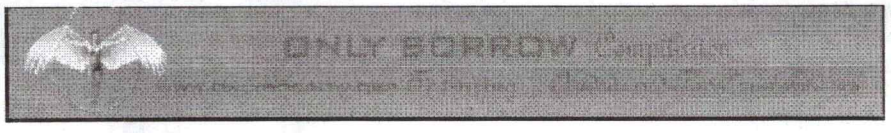
Indeed, I concur. **Forward...** is modernization of their previous work, but still you can here the deeper, sinister nature of their music that I loved and remember from **Where Broken Angels Lie**; it winds beneath the rhythmic pulses, melodic overtones and wiggles between the danceable tracks creating a brighter, more danceable, foot stomping sweep of genius that leaves the bright melodies to our senses, but the darkness to our imagination. The rhythms are flawless and truly mastered, with overlaying keyboards, sudden breakdowns and complicated arrangements that keep you moving. The death of some electronic music similar is repetition – or I should say the lack of finesse that makes it seem like there isn't any repetition even though loops may continue through the track. You don't have this with The Azoic because of the constant manipulations provided to the music on all levels, from rhythm to melody to vocals.

A highlight to this release, besides *Progression* of course, is *Evolution*. On this track the smooth voice of Kristy is replaced by the sinister rasp of Steve. One of the darker tracks on the album as far as mood goes, contributed to by the thumpier bassline and alto rhythm melodies. *Progression* meanwhile appears on the fourth track here, but we are treated at the end on tracks 8, 10 and 11 to remixes of this piece. Of particular note is the *dirge* remix, created by Assemblage 23. Assemblage 23 takes the modern track and moves it back a few centuries, opening with brilliantly scored piano. The rhythm is minimal but fascinating. It's excellently crafted.

To sum it up, the long three year wait for another release by The Azoic was well worth it. The duo of Kristy Venrick and Steve Laskarides have improved remarkably. I thought Nilaihah's **Resister** was one of the top releases of 2000. They've not disappointed yet again, and I find The Azoic's **Forward...** to be one of the top releases of 2001.

Contact Information:
Post: Nilaihah Records, P.O. Box 82614, Columbus, OH, 43202
E-Mail: theazoic@nilaihah.com
Web: http://www.nilaihah.com/azoic.htm

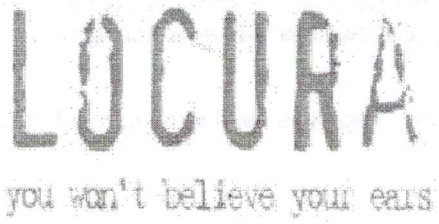
THIS MONTH'S LEGENDS SPONSORED IN PART BY



[3] Reviewed in Legends #91.
[4] Reviewed in Legends #101.

REVIEW: LOCURA – "10 SONG DEMOLITION"

By Rat Bastard



Locura is a female-fronted electronic band from Melbourne, FL. They are quite difficult to pin down into any particular genre, but they combine elements of rock, ethereal, industrial, and whatever else they feel like tacking on. Oddly enough, despite the wide range of influences, Locura do have a cohesive sound, driven by very prominent and atmospheric synth melodies that dance alongside equally prominent (and oftimes quite groovilicious) basslines while Queen Mary's slightly processed vocals twist between and around them. Of course, there is percussion in the mix as well, providing the obligatory supporting role.

The first several tracks, like *October* (which almost feels like lounge music... if your lounge happens to have been ripped from the mind of Clive Barker and caters to the legions of Hell) and *Ready Right Now*, feature very in-your-face keyboard melodies while the bass and percussion strike from underneath. However, by about midway through the demo, the bass leaps into the front seat and drives this car home on tracks like *The Damned* and *Take*. The vocals share control on a constant basis throughout, maintaining their usual haunting, hypnotic, and exotic qualities.

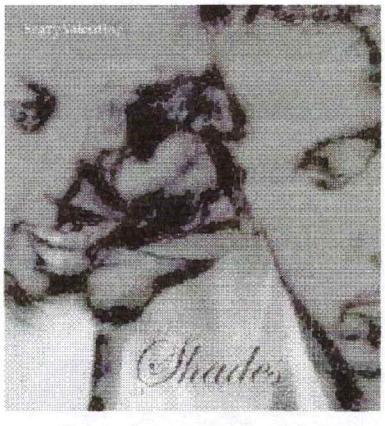
Unfortunately, "hypnotic" can be applied as a criticism as well. Like a group of master hypnotists, Locura have the uncanny ability to make me forget all about them after the listening experience is over. That's not to say that they aren't talented, or that they don't have great potential, but that, simply put, their songs, overall, aren't engaging or interesting enough to fully suit my tastes over a long term period. The CD sounded great for the first few listens, but there isn't enough depth to prevent it from a quick and inevitable trip to the dust collection sector of my music collection.

Of course, this is merely a demo, and it does establish that Locura does have some good ideas, and the ability to implement them. Time will tell how well they develop them in future releases.

Contact Information:
Web: http://www.locura.cc/

REVIEW: SCARY VALENTINE – "SHADES"

By Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)



Scary Valentine consists of two people: Scot Gordon and Shari Valenta, and this CD has additional vocals by Becca Gomez from Pure Drama.

This is the second release for Scary Valentine. Their first release, **Gorgon**[5], was in 1999. Sales were done online, and not many copies were sold. According to info supplied to me, this second release is doing well only as downloads at mp3.com.

What a shame.

At first, I was prepared to lump this in with other generic swirly goth music (a sub-genre I don't care for on the whole, IMHO). Maybe it was the two person-one male-one female-synths and samples listed on the liner that made me assume that this was what I was getting into, but the CD is harder, deeper, sinister and at times, evil.

If I heard songs like *Rip it Apart*, *Just to Kiss*, *Think and Sin*, *F-Yeah*, and *Strange Bond* in a club, I would stay on the dancefloor or run to get on it.

[5] Reviewed in Legends #100, July 2000.

Some songs remind me a bit of bands like Bel Canto (*Troubled as We*, *Minute Holiday*) probably because of the swooping female vocals. And others would be perfect as an addition to horror film soundtracks (*Clouding my World*), which is no bad thing in my book. Some of the samples and bass lines work their way into your head with a sinister snakiness that you can't shake loose easily. The "dirtiness" of some of the synths was intriguing...the rawness was a refreshing change from so many polished synth-based bands.

Do yourself a favour...don't just download the mp3's...buy a copy of the CD and encourage this band to do further forays into producing music.

Contact List:
Post: 8815 Jackdaw St., Littleton, CO, 80126
E-Mail: gordo@scaryvalentine.com
Web: http://www.scaryvalentine.com

REVIEW: X-STATIC URGE – "ANNAIS" AND "X-STATIC URGE"

By Marcus Pan

Jersey's bars, pubs and other shady places have been plagued by the enigmatic Mean Little Man for some time now. He's the brains behind such alterna-rock outfits as Cinnamon Drafthouse, Misercordia, Chris Eissing and the latest creation is techno/trance duo – X-Static Urge. MLM met Megan Traley in 1998 and they've been hatching the X-Static Urge project since.

Most recently, X-Static Urge's begun to offer two EP length CDs via MP3.com. Beginning with a self-titled and later the **Annais** album, which is only a few songs shy of a full length. Already, from these two bodies of work, you can see X-Static Urge moving ahead in their vision, changing their sound subtly while still retaining the grooves they cut their teeth on together.

The duo have their own specific functions and that way this tends to lend itself well to the music, their different arrangements complementing each other well. The dual arrangement style is also working for them in the complication area as well. As Megan herself states, "A lot of electronica is overly repetitive," even going so far as to say that some trance and techno creators today are "half assed."

All trance and techno is, to some degree, repetitive. That's one of the key natures of the genre. But Megan and the MLM tend to use their electronic tools to open new doors and move further into new territory. The repetition is there, sure – when I'm on the floor surrounded by trance I need something to hold on to. Something that grounds me. That grounding wire is there through all of X-Static Urge's work, but then they twist it...move it along and create breaks and melodies that helps the rest of you rise and follow it along.

They also use the instruments to create sounds that haven't been done before. While some of the music tends toward floaty goa, and others towards computeresque industrial, all of the sounds that make it up are different than other past works. They're not so different that I'd go so far to say X-SU are creating something experimental to a high degree, so you can still relax and enjoy it for what it is. But this is a new creation, not a rehashed version of something you'd find already.

X-Static Urge, the first release, is solidly more floor-enhanced. With heavier rhythms and being a bit stompier, the self-titled 5 track is rife with great dancefloor grooves. It opens straight out with a percussive rhythm with the track *Open Your Mind*. I Love the groove of *Get Me Down*, a highlight track on the first release.

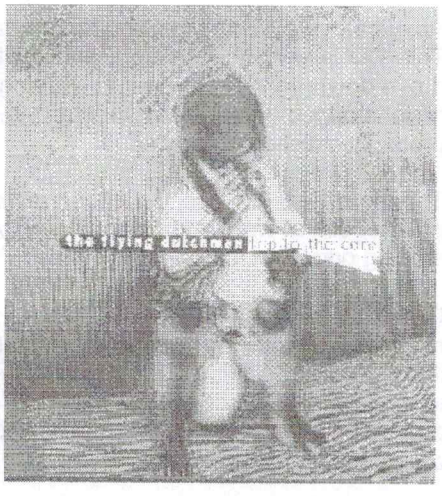
Meanwhile, **Annais** slows it down, creating a more mellow, chill-out atmosphere. It has its higher-BPM moments like *The Blue,* but even then it's subtler than their previous release with lighter melodies and softer rhythms and percussion. The CD has that perfect stasis that helps it lie just under perception without being lost as ambience. Another favorite is *Touch*. If for a moment you think you have found the ultimate diva, and there are plenty out there, hold that thought until you listen to Megan's vocals on this track.

The end result of all this, at least thus far, is that X-Static Urge is already growing in new directions just out the gate. They're doing so quickly, maturing rapidly, and as long as they keep on going they're sure to put up some interesting sounds in the air. If you're a trance/electronica dancefloor DJ, you owe yourself to look into picking these folks up for your next spin.

Contact Information:
Web: http://www.meanlittleman.com/music/urge/

REVIEW: THE FLYING DUTCHMAN – "TRIP TO THE CORE"

By Zubrovka



I don't know the genre of this and it doesn't really matter. Electronic I guess, except that like others that I have listened to recently, there are lyrics interspersed with the sounds. Some are sampled or voiced over, not really carrying the tune, but actually clashing against it.

And then I experienced **Trip to the Core**. You don't just listen to this once, you have to play it over and over. Then you can let it flow around you like background noise; well that is until you catch yourself moving with a track or mouthing the words. Then you sort of realize the worth of the production, the way it seeps into your consciousness. The Flying Dutchman is Hanyo van Osterom, Ciska Ruitenberg: vocals, Edwin de Herder: guitars.

Not What It Seems comes on with a rolling deepness and sampled sounds, but the lyrics really grab you too. Ciska Ruitenberg speaks with her delicate deadpan voice, "in my sleep you can say I say the weirdest things but you don't know half the things I see when I'm awake." *Imaginal Sculpture* picks up the tempo, a driving drum beat with some really weird voice and sound samples.

Music, Money, Lawyers produced from a message off an answering machine and blended into a mix of screaming guitars and Ciska Ruitenberg moaning her own intoned version of the message, entertains you, gives a visual. *If You Got A Reason* somehow reminds me of something funky done in the 1970's, like Country Joe and the Fish, thrown in an acidic blender.

Music For Zen Radio has an ethereal quality to it as it flows into an almost mainstream jazz sound, with just a hint of bent notes and weirdness in the background, the piano and brass ensemble sounds layered over a guitar wah sound. *Big Iron Whales* talking about fascination with ships in an almost erotic tone, wailing guitars and female moans interspersed with more of Ciska's clear lyrics. It bumps you along, I swear.

Strange Planets cuts loose with an immersion of synth samples leading to a drum cadence, almost military and then fades back in and out. Ciska sings again and the noise is actually comforting against the backdrop of sounds. The guitar is almost Hendrix like, wailing and silence. *La Luna La Bella* arrives in syncopation synth funk, replete with horn ensemble. *Rare Thing (Poison Mix)* stretches vocals and sound and then hurls a driving beat at you as Ciska sings and moans and echoes. Male voice samples blend in with the synths, then fades.

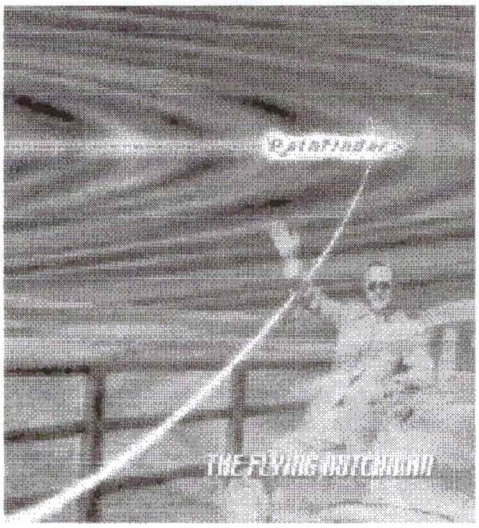
4th World Theater smoothes synths and beat, capped off with really strange strings, sort of a bazaar like sound, very exotic. *To The Core* falls and crawls back to you in a waterfall of strings and earthy sounds, then there is sort of a gypsy feeling to it as Ciska's lyrics swirl around you. And then it heavily comes on with multiple voices wailing "to the core..." *Trip To The Core* is a very human sampling of sounds with a machine background, a high pitched whine and then a weird

sort of wailing dropping in and out. Metal doors swing on rusty hinges and a beat comes on in a purposeful bent. It makes me feel sad and good. Very odd to cross those emotions together.

Contact Information:
Post: Tone Casualties, 6353 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, CA, 90028
E-Mail: dutchamb@worldonline.nl
Web: http://www.tonecasualties.com

REVIEW: THE FLYING DUTCHMAN – "PATHFINDER"

By J 'Hirez' H-R



This is the soundtrack to an alternate reality. Imagine, if you will, a post-steampunk world where the industrious peoples of a United States of Europe travel the mighty autobahns between the intellectual centres of Prague, Heidelberg, Paris, Amsterdam and Oxford in shiny Tatra 603s. For one warm and almost hallucinogenic summer, this recording was playing everywhere you cared to listen...

Ah, whatever. Wishful thinking butters no parsnips, as my mother never said. This CD is very fine, though, and really does put me in mind of the time I drove down from Zoetemeer to Vlissingen... But if I'd had this to listen to, I'd have stopped more often to pay attention to both CD and scenery and probably missed my ferry.

The more I listen to this, the more I realize that there's a particularly European psychedelia at work – far more *Doors of perception* than the more rock & roll starting point that is *Fear and loathing*.

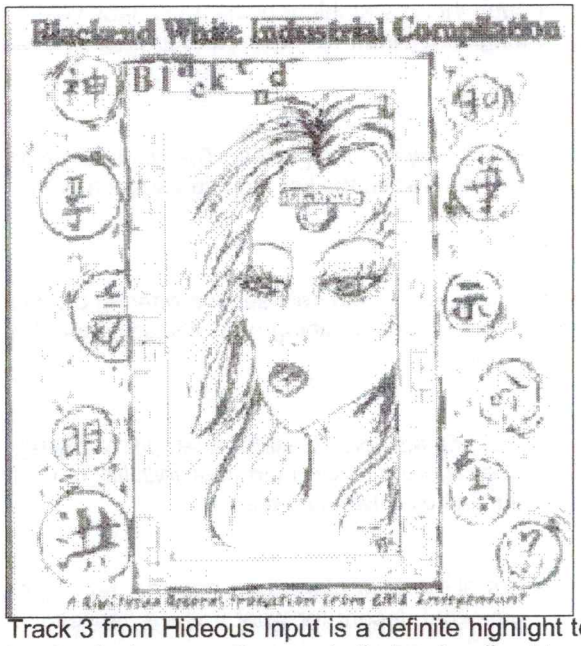
Good words for **Pathfinder** would probably include lush, dream-like, minimalist, kinetic and intriguing. Actually, I'm not too sure about intriguing – it's how you'd describe a repulsively-flavoured box of chocolates – but there's enough languid jazz malarkey going on here to make a chap wonder what the band had been listening to the night before they cut some of the tracks. I'm fairly sure they've been at the Weather Report, and they're probably no strangers to either Portishead or Dub Syndicate. All of which are good things.

This is a damn fine record, so it's slightly hard to know what to say about it because I can quite happily drift off with the thing, rather than string sensible words together in pleasing sentences. For instance, I really enjoy the clattery drum & bass circularity of *Martial music radio*, and *One foot* and *Pathfinder(2)* are both tunes from the missing channel that you'd have to rotate your wireless through 90 degrees to reality to receive. The echoing tannoy in *Is your heart* bring to mind the vast, deserted concourses of railway termini – or perhaps a Ballardian vision of a conceptual departure lounge for the trip into some other reality.

Contact Information:
Post: Tone Casualties, 6353 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, CA, 90028
E-Mail: dutchamb@worldonline.nl
Web: http://www.tonecasualties.com

REVIEW: V/A – "BLACKEND WHITE INDUSTRIAL MUSIC COMPILATION"

By Marcus Pan



Everyone welcome new label on the block, GMI Independent. Sister label to the newly started RivitHead Records in FL, GMI is also planning on beginning a new magazine called StygianStar.net, and for their first issue they may be offering this CD. The **Blackend White** compilation is very similar in scope to RivitHead's **Blackend** release, as you can probably tell. This release however stayed strongly in the experimental and darker industrial plane when they assubmled the music for the work. So let's get on with it then…

***Dynosaur* – Genetic Mishap**

Genetic Mishap are the guys that organized GMI Independent and this very CD, so it's only natural to start here. *Dynosaur* is a mix-it-up experiment that remains rather chaotic.

***Death Iz Coming* – Doomsday Kult**

Very whispering with backing brush-style rhythms. It can be redundant, but remains interesting enough in the make-up to not fall completely to boring. This one is offered to us by Doomsday Kult, probably one of the hardest working bands I've come across.

***Don't Waste a Minute* – Hideous Input**

Track 3 from Hideous Input is a definite highlight to the compilation, switching from the chaotic makeup of the previous two tracks to a grooving, controlled and well put together piece that, while somewhat minimal, holds your attention through it's smooth nature and floaty melodic overtones during vocal breaks. I believe that was a run-on sentence, sorry.

***Gunsitter* – Two Ton Flood**

Two Ton Flood, takes a much stronger EBM stance, touching vocals with some faded metallic vox and keeping a computeresque sliding melody style. But I like *GunSitter*, even if it's somewhat standard based. It's well done and reminds me of some of the best from groups like Nothing Inside.

***Hypertrophy* – Reshure**

Hypertrophy by Reshure opens with an interesting grooviness to it, occasionally fading into rhythmless sighs and whistle effects. Not overly engaging, but thankfully somewhat short at under two minutes.

***Initializing* – Defacation Plus**

Another under 2 minute track, and is basically a mish-mash of engine and grinding sounds with a slowly growing standard-fare beat track behind it. However, the band name, Defacation Plus, is pretty accurate, as this track is kind of like a dump of sound mixed together with no semblance of musicality.

***Jaded* – Sanitary Refuse**

Here we have a mixture of drum 'n bass at the outset, occasional cynical vocal samples as the song name *Jaded* implies, and very angry repetitive vocals. Uninspiring at best, including the stock guitar riffs.

***One Night Stand (2TFMix)* – Hideous Input**

Another from Hideous Input, who are clearly showing up all the other bands here with their offerings. *One Night Stand* is a darkwave track that combines various melodic interludes with quiet, whispered vocals. It's got a nice rhythm, interesting synth work and is awash with key chords that slide in and out just behind the higher pitched melodies. Very well put together, and it grows in form as it moves on, becoming more complicated as you listen.

***Broken Teeth (Parallel)* – Sanitary Refuse**

Track 9 returns to the work of Sanitary Refuse. Again, a drum and bass style makeup here with interlaced spoken word samples, all mixed together in a chaotic manner. More noise-some than musical. Mechanized guitar riffs tear through the track on an occasional basis, just in case you were getting bored.

Copyright © 2001 by Marcus Pan. Copy but do not modify.

***PreNA (Wah-ChoutMix)* – Genetic Mishap**
Genetic Mishap offer us a remix of their *PreNA* track from their release of the same name. Here is an example of the chaos-as-music attempt done well that other bands on this compilation have been trying to attempt (Sanitary Refuse, Defacation Plus, etc.). GM ride the very edge of music, drifting just far enough into the ambient-noise and chaos void to remain interesting. See more on these guys in recent issues of Legends Magazine when we covered their past two full length releases.

***The Undead* – Doomsday Kult**
Doomsday Kult is also a RivetHead staple, creating very complicated and rhythmically moving pieces. *The Undead* mixes up the compilation with an astounding increase in BPMs and is one of their best darkwave tracks. You can seem more on DDK in recent issues of Legends.

***The Fading of Hills and Sunset* – Reshure**
Suddenly turning moody and exquisitely dark with a low-brow, minimal arrangement, Reshure's second offering on this compilation on track 12 isn't bad. While a bit standard-fare melodically and not quite something new, it's well done if a little bland.

***Maze* – Defacation Plus**
Track 13 is Defacation Plus again, with another badly arranged piece of...well, defacation. Guitars, attempts at rhythm and other things coalesce together into something only vaguely musical, albeit more musical than their *Initializing* track simply because it has more of a beat. Again, I thank them for keeping it short, just over two minutes.

***Wolfkiss (HardKlubEdit)* – Two Ton Flood**
Wolfkiss is a dance/electronica piece from Two Ton Flood. Interesting, it's still a little bland and has this feeling of "missing something" to give it kick and vigor. But it's not bad at all, it's somewhat decent for what it is - a dancefloor, moody-styled electronica song.

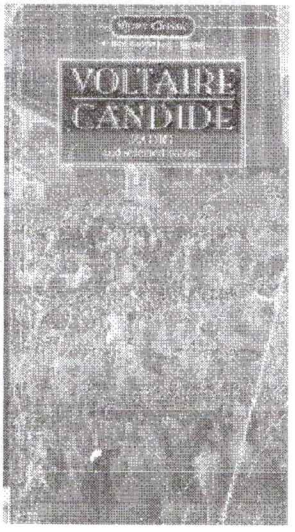
And then there's the bonus hidden track – which I tend to believe is the drunken Genetic Mishap guys fucking around in the studio to the tune of the *Star Spangled Banner*. Well, hell, if they can remake the *Chickendance*, who's to say they can't mess around with this one, eh?

The **Blackend White** comp. is interesting and has a few really fine gems (Hideous Input most notably). There are a few tracks that I could have done completely without, but it's a good example of the very experimental side of industrial and darkwave music. Good for those that like it raw.

Contact Information:
Web: http://doomzdaykult.tripod.com/rivitheadrecords/

Off the Shelf – "Candide, Zadig and Selected Stories"

By Marcus Pan



Voltaire spent much of his life railing against the various forms of hypocrisy, whether it be within church, government or society. He was born in 1694 in France, and at the age of twenty three, Francois-Marie Arouet, took the name of de Voltaire for his writings – much to the chagrin of his parents who expected him to go into law. Instead he became devoted to the many forms of literature, and especially the tragedies and philosophical meanderings of the Jesuits and Jansenists of the period. While Shakespeare wrote tragedies to entertain and for the enjoyment of people, Voltaire wrote as a form of editorial. He critically slammed and poked at those, many times by name or using anagrams of names, that he found to be incorrect in views, standpoints and ideals. As such, he became something of a martyr.

Even after twenty four years of exile from his home city of Paris, and regardless of his return upon which he was cheered in the streets and watched his tragedy *Irene* performed and crowned before him, upon his death weeks later he was denied burial there and whisked away to Champagne at the age of 83. He served two episodes in France's Bastille and spent much of his time in other countries besides that where he was born because of the fear of imprisonment and constant

exiles.

Much of his work is forgotten today, as he was very prolific in verse tragedies. But his most well known are his prose work, of which this collection has a wide variety of such, even looking at his very short pieces like *Micromegas* and *Plato's Dream*. The first of these is one of my favorites, one of the first science fiction style pieces that looked at infinitesimal sizes from a wonderfully philosophical standpoint. His strongest capabilities was in the form of conversations, detailing monologues and dialogues with a theological flair. Of these, the discussions within *Count Chesterfield's Ears and Chaplain Goudman* is one of the best, and is used to close these selections.

I found the placement of *Candide* to open this collection, detailing the travels of a young man of the same name, who's very naiveté and ignorance lead him into all sorts of trouble. Now maybe I'm an evil dick, but I find that anyone, who after going through some of the stuff that Candide went through, who still talks about how everything is "right with the world," is an utter idiot and deserves all the horrors that are thrown upon him. This opens the book up well, as the other stories deal with much of the same as well as being blatantly sarcastic towards dignitaries of Voltaire's day. He attacks and virtually levels with his wit and spite, and with the closed mindedness of the 1700's where you can be burned at the stake simply for thinking beyond the religious and government orders of the time his bravery comes unmatched.

Meanwhile the closing of the book, with *Count Chesterfield's Ears and Chaplain Goudman*, is refreshingly spiteful. Railing against the personification of Candide as the world's most ignorant and naive young man, the conversation had between Monsieur Sidrac, Count Chesterfield and Monsieur Goudman, ends with Sidrac proving a truly important point that, at its core, states a universal truth…at least to the cynical assholes like myself. And that is simply – everything is shit.

MP3: The Music Revolution

By Mike Ventarola

Before I get on my soapbox, I will once again highlight a business on the net that is doing some superb work. Latex Designs by Donna creates handmade items from Australia where the quality rivals any manufactured item you could hope to buy in any store.

Recently, I had these kind folks make me a "bat" pack. This is a backpack in the shape of a bat naturally, with vinyl batwings that snap onto the pack for the closed wing effect or unsnapped for a fully winged furry body creature with a very discreet side zipper. The owner, Donna, recently went on a casting call wearing some of the creations and it seems there is a very high probability that a familiar face may be in the Matrix 2 within the very near future! The pricing is not as severe as one would think considering the exchange rate of the US dollar. Check out some of these gorgeous designs at www.zipworld.com.au/~dnaylor/ or email Donna directly at latexcat@hotmail.com.

Don't Piss On My Leg and Tell Me It's Raining

Some time ago, a marketing genius named Michael Robertson designed the Mp3.com company. This was the start of a music revolution for hundreds of thousands of artists longing to be heard but unable to make headway due to the dictatorial regime of the major 5 labels.

Millions of fans gleaned downloadable music worldwide, making Internet stars of some of the artists featured. The company paid the artists for this privilege of allowing folks to stream and download these songs. MP3 then got sloppy by allowing folks to cheat the stats, thereby falsely raising songs on the charts that did NOT belong there. Further, they added fraud upon fraud with insisting that the artists pay 20 dollars a month in order to receive any money for the use of their music content. Auctions were also added whereby an artist could "buy" their way up the top of the charts.

The biggest blow to the company came when they initiated the beam it program, where a listener could store their purchased music in a file on their own computer in order to listen to it from any computer with net access. This was a rather gray area where the major labels felt it was a violation of copyrights, when in actuality this was just one consumer's music stored on their own PC and obtained by their own password. It does not differentiate all that much from purchasing a CD and putting it on a cassette, but the Big 5 Major label mafia did not see it this way.

Mp3.com eventually sold to Universal-Vivendi, one of the main leaders of the litigation suits against MP3, and history with music has changed yet again and not in a good way.

On October 1, 2001 Universal Vivendi enacted a half penny deal for all artists with music available on Mp3.

This is a dramatic loss of revenue for the artists who were doing rather well previously. The biggest kick in the head is the company STILL demands that artists pay 20 dollars a month to receive the payments for their work that is being used. Now this all wouldn't be a major insult if the company was fiscally hurting and needed to trim costs and asked the artists to provisionally help out with it. Instead, in corporate terrorist like tactics, this became the law of the land and the artists, who MADE this company what it is, once again were fed bureaucratic and rhetorical bullshit. That very week that these changes were enacted, the CEO of the company was on CNBC bragging about how the company fiscally exceeded their expectations for the year. Further, Universal bought the CEO a 17 million dollar apartment in NYC.

In light of the fact that Mp3 has HURT many artists while the corporate bigwigs live in their ivory towers of greed, I have made it my mission to boycott anything put out by Universal and its subsidiaries, past and present. This company has had a long history of abusing artists, so much so, that even Courtney Love is taking them to court (more on this later.)

The real deal behind all of this is that the major labels want to now feature subscription services where listeners will pay for the privilege of streaming and downloading music. This will ultimately squeeze out the indie artists as the major artists are brought on board. The thing their market analyzers forgot to check into is that the majority of folks who "steal" music from sites such as Napster, RARELY buy music, and most certainly will find yet another web based outlet where they can swipe songs. Folks who buy music want to have the physical item in their hand and won't be content with just a PC version of something that they have to burn themselves.

In light of the fact that many artists this month are hurting because of this, I urge the readers of this column and fans of the underground music scene to BOYCOTT UNIVERSAL. If you are downloading songs off the net, please don't do it to the indies unless it is on sites such as Ampcast.com where artists are reasonably paid, simply because many of these folks go without food in order to make music. This is a fact, but I am not at liberty to divulge the horror of this situation. Take all the major label artists you want to, in order to give these companies the kick in their assets that they deserve, but BUY your music at great sites like Middle Pillar, Dancing Ferret Discs, Nilaihah, Projekt, and other related independent focused music shops who CARE about OUR scene.

If you have read this far and want to know about the Courtney Love vs. Universal deal, please check:

LOVE WINS MAJOR VICTORY AND RIGHT TO PROCEED IN UNIVERSAL LAWSUIT; In A Stunning Setback For Vivendi Universal, Judge Fumiko Wasserman Has Ruled That Courtney Love Can Proceed To Trial
http://mi2n.com/press.php3?press_nb=28241

Patrick Rogers of Dancing Ferret Discs announced that some film footage was taken on 10/31during the now infamous Dracula's Ball. This footage will be incorporated into their new television commercials starting in 2002.

During this delightful event, a FREE CD was given away that is 17 tracks long and includes music by Paralysed Age, Neuroticfish, Unto Ashes, Thou Shalt Not, Voltaire, Black Tape for a Blue Girl, The Dreamside, Nosferatu, Noyce, Moulin Noir, Behind The Scenes, Seraphim Shock, Judith, Endanger, and Wings of Destiny. There is also a brand new exclusive track from Rasputina (*Gingerbread Coffin*) and a 2-minute preview of the brand new Cruxshadows single, *Tears*.

The Cruxshadows and Neuroticfish have new releases slated for December 4th. The Cruxshadows have a new single, *Tears*, and Neuroticfish will release **Sushi**, which includes all the tracks from their first two singles, as well as their brand new single, *Wake Me Up*. Also coming out on December 4th is **Best of Nosferatu, Volume 1** from Nosferatu, one of the top-selling British vamp-rock bands ever.

Advance warning! On Sunday, May 26, 2002, there will indeed be a Dracula's Ball at the Trocadero Theatre in Philadelphia. What makes this one especially exciting is that the two days preceding it will see the Troc playing host to ProjektFest 2002. Projekt is one of the world's leading record labels for quieter, ethereal dark music, and their festivals, which happen only every few years, attract an international audience and feature top-notch bands. Mark your calendars now, as Memorial Day Weekend will definitely be *the* weekend to be in Philadelphia!

Finally, Philadelphia-area residents who are over 18 may get a kick out of *Dracula Sucks*, a vintage 70s film with a decidedly different take on the Dracula legend, playing for one weekend only at the Roxy Theatre. Details can be found at http://www.ferret.com.

If you haven' t heard Eternia yet, here is yet another review that states, "One of the finest mixes of old and new styles of 'Gothic' that I've heard in years!" For the latest review on this sensational artist, go to http://www.geocities.com/kultovbela/reviews.html.

Goth Goes Mainstream!
Amethystium was initially featured on MP3.com and came under the Hidden Sanctuary wings. The artist's albums have hit the Billboard New Age chart some weeks back, debuting at #7! It was 3 weeks in the Top 10, peaking at #5. The band label, Neurodisc, decided to increase the marketing budget considerably, so they will be more committed to it than they planned initially, which is great news – after all they've just licensed the recording. When it reached the Billboard chart they hadn't even started the radio promotion yet, so they where surprised too. I guess the high amount of play on mp3.com might have had a positive effect on the CD sales when it got in the stores. Amethystium will be going to Ampcast soon, along with many other artists. In the meantime, however, you can hear this Enigma style work at www.mp3.com/amethystium.

Ashengrace has a new song up called *The River (edit)*, a shorter version of the one that actually comes on the new EP. After months of complications, the **Eve and Mistral** EP has been released and is up on the artists site.

Ashengrace's was recently interviewed for Gothic Beauty Magazine (now on sale at Hot Topic, by the way). Furthermore, they gave the album **Surface** 5 out of 5 stars, the only band to get that rating in this month's reviews! www.mp3.com/ashengrace

---

All Hope Lost
For those of you who like your music dark, moody, poetic with a whole lot of macabre, check out the work of All Hope Lost. Currently added to the artist's repertoire are two new songs. The first is a Doom Metal rendition of Chopin's Funeral March, *Candlemass* and the other is entitled *Blood Red Roses*, an epic, 11 minute Gothic Metal song with several movements, similar in spirit to European bands like My Dying Bride, Theatre Of Tragedy, and Paradise Lost. www.mp3.com/allhopelost

---

ProjektList #170 | from Sam Rosenthal

This Ascension in stores
Projekt has re-issued all four of the out of print This Ascension albums. Album #3 and #4 (**Walk Softly, a Dream Lies Here** and **Sever**) are now in stores nationwide. These CDs were originally released on Santa Barbara's Tess Records. For years we distributed Tess through our mail-order catalog, but hard times fell and the label shut down rendering these albums out of print for a while. I badgered Matt repeatedly till he finally he gave in and licensed them to Projekt – to make these discs available to you again! This Ascension is very popular among fans of both Goth Rock and Ethereal Goth because of Dru's lovely, powerful vocals and Kevin's intricate guitar work. All Music Guide recently wrote "As evidenced by 'Tears in Rain,' This Ascension are a welcome if under-mentioned addition to the darkwave hall of fame." So, if you haven't gotten these albums yet, nows your chance!

Projekt $6.98 sale

New addition to the Projekt.com store:

Various Artists: Funeral Songs | $13.98
http://www.projekt.com/projekt/product.asp?sku=REL65072

Projekt festival 2002: http://www.projektfest.com/

http://www.projekt.com/projekt/sale.asp
Nothing beats a sale to brighten your troubled day. We've been getting an overwhelming response to our $6.98 sale, so I've just added more titles to the list! Let Projekt music help you relax and escape. Through Midnight, Monday November 12th, the following discs are on sale for $6.98.

R16 Area: Radio Caroline
R17 Area: The Perfect Dream
R19 Area: Between the Purple & Pink
R20 Area: Fragments of the Morning
R24 The Arms of Someone New: Susan Sleepwalking
R25 The Arms of Someone New: Love, Power & Justice
R01 Attrition: This Death House
R02 Attrition: The Attrition of Reason
R03 Attrition: The Realm of the Hungry Ghosts
R04 Attrition: Smiling at the Hypogonder Club
R05 Attrition: The 50th Gate
PRO101 Audra: (self titled debut)
PRO105 Faith & Disease: Beneath the trees
R21 Jeff Greinke: Over Ruins
R22 Judgement of Paris: Conversion
R23 Judgement of Paris: Signal
PRO112 Lowsunday: Elesgiem
PRO108 Lycia: Compilation Appearances Vol. 1
PRO79 Steve Roach/Roger King: Dust To Dust
PRO115 This Ascension: Tears in Rain
PRO116 This Ascension: Light and Shade
PRO106 Unto Ashes: MOON oppose MOON
PRO29 Various Artists: From Across This Gray Land No. 2
PRO100 Various Artists: Projekt 100
PRO102 Various Artists: Orphee
PRO94 Various Artists: Seireenia

Gothcon 2002

Congratulations to Mistress Catherinna (a newly appointed StarVox writer) as one of the few selected DJs slated to spin at GothCon 2002! She was chosen out of a huge number of very qualified DJ's for a very competitive spot.

The band lineup is an excellent assortment of gothic and industrial, many of whom are new and up and coming bands. Our hats off to the GothCon staff for picking rising stars such as 13th Sky and Shadow Cabinet PLUS bands like Judith, The Machine in the Garden and Gossamer!

GOTHCON - MARCH 28-30, 2002
http://www.gothcon.com

The GOTHCON staff is pleased to announce the band selections for 2002. They are, in alphabetical order:

13th Sky - http://www.mp3.com/13thsky/
Butterfly Messiah - http://www.butterflymessiah.com
Emergence - http://www.emergenceband.com
Eye Kandy - http://www.eyekandy.net
Fiction8 - http://www.fiction8.com
Gossamer - http://www.idrecords.com/gossamer
Judith - http://www.asthetik.com/amphion/
Mindless Faith - http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/4357/MindlessFaith.html
Noise Process - http://www.geocities.com/noise_process/
Numeralia - http://www.numeralia.com
Schone Maschine - http://www.schonemaschine.com
Stromkern - http://www.stromkern.com
The Machine In The Garden - http://www.tmitg.com
The Shadow Cabinet - http://www.theshadowcabinet.com
ThouShaltNot - http://www.robotgodlabs.com/tsn/

SELECTED DJs: [in alphabetical order]

spinmistress ^batty^ - Cleveland, Ohio
Mistress Catherinna - Seattle, Washington
DJ DeadParrot - Atlanta, Georgia
DJ De'ath - UK
DJ MindCage - Washington, DC
DJ Voodoo - San Francisco, California
DJ Vulture - New Orleans, Louisiana

GOTHCON GUESTS:

the list of featured guests thus far, check back on their site for this list will be growing:

BlueBlood Magazine - http://www.blueblood.net
Caleb Storms - http://www.calebstorms.com
Carrie Carolin - http://www.darklinks.com
Daniel Kemp - http://www.westgatenecromantic.net
Elaine Bergstrom - http://www.vampireathenaeum.org/ebergstrom
Gothic Beauty Magazine - http://www.gothicbeauty.com
Leilah Wendell - http://www.westgatenecromantic.net
Linda Joyce Franks - http://www.nimbvs.com/
Robert Tritthardt - http://www.writheandshine.com
Serena Valentino - http://www.memento-mori.com/gloomcookie/
Starvox Magazine - http://www.starvox.net
Suzanne G. Hyland - http://www.faery.net
Tom Savini - http://www.tomsavini.com

These lists do NOT indicate any particular order, or specify what date any guest, band, or DJ are making an appearance. Final itinerary will be announced on the gothcon website soon!

ACCOMODATIONS and TICKETS

Once again, the official dates for gothcon are march 28-30, 2002. We are also proud to announce the selected venue: the New Orleans Marriott.

Ideally located in the historic New Orleans French Quarter. Within short walking distance of all major attractions, the Aquarium of the Americas, the Riverwalk, French Market, Bourbon Street, and the Convention Center.

TICKETS can now be purchased through the website! check the ticket section for details.

WEBSITE UPDATED!

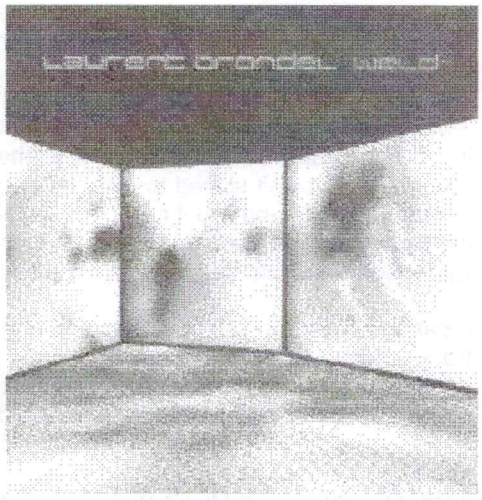
ALL of this information is available on the newly updated gothcon website! Be sure to check out the information for volunteering - we could certainly use your help! Our official banner is on there, too - use it on your site, link to us!

GOTHCON is a yearly non-profit music and arts festival dedicated to support those with HIV and AIDS. Official website and further information: http://www.gothcon.com/

This wraps it up for this issue. Please be sure to support your underground bands by purchasing their music so that they can afford to make more. Contrary to popular belief, these bands are NOT rolling in the cash and every dollar helps to offset expenses with touring, promotions, and music production. Let's continue to show the major labels that the underground world will not be stopped by their corporate terrorism and greed. Above all, BOYCOTT UNIVERSAL!!

REVIEW: LAURENT BRONDEL – "WELD"

By Zubrovka



First song out and I was about to dismiss this CD as techno dance. *Everyday* starts out with that techno trance prefabricated sound. Then it creeps in on you, a female voice speaking in and out and the synths, begins to get a little heavier and I get pulled in, deep.

Then it gets downright trippy with the voices in *Somatic Propeller*. It's haunting and heavy and sets you up for *Cotton Candy*; "all these things, I have to do, having a good time, know what I mean?" intones a sexy voice. Interesting piano background here adds sort of a theatrical twist with the dialogue.

Confused starts low with a metallic sound like turning metal against metal slowly, with low synths and dramatic piano, sort of a dirge and I catch a hint of 80's electronica; something along the line of Soft Cell. All wrapped in a very offbeat drum cadence. *Stay* follows along with an almost funeralesque organ, acoustic guitars and a dreamy female voice droning "stay..." It has a sublime mystical mood about it.

Atomatic Lover jolts you awake with a steady slow beat and low synths, very abstract stuff here that seems to work. Bits and pieces of other sounds blend and voices, then a soft jazzy piano, for a moment, in and out. Very erotic in a soaking way. *21 Century Lounge* comes on as almost soft wandering jazz, very demanding and smooth, but those voices, man they sort of engulf both channels in the background. It's downright haunting and it's very good. Seductive.

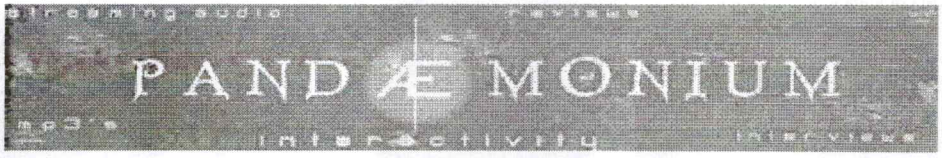
Mental Intruder; sort of a trippy experimental jazz, breaking glass, great beat and then it just rolls on out in a canvas, like an orchestrated madness. *No Time To Die Here* throws out a very syncopated but smooth sound that falls away to abstractness of sounds and then comes right back up to a smooth center, then falls away again. *No Time To Die There,* the second in what I think must be a trilogy of connected sound/thought, comes back with the same basic song in a lighter tone with a heavier drum cadence. *No Time To Die Anywhere* carries the theme on in a wilder drum and the sound is just wild like vibrating a tin sheet, synths, sort of 70's style reminds me of early Pink Floyd or King Crimson.

Semi-Automatic Vibrator comes back to trippy techno trance, a lot lighter than the previous at first with woodwind sounds and suddenly this guitar blazes in, Robert Fripp like, and steals the lightness followed by a fast bass, Stanley Clarke style, that blends back to the Fripp like guitar and carries the fast beat and synths along. Very impressive. Odd slicing sounds, slicing my brain...

Death Machines ends it with a heaviness, the bent is industrial trance, with male voice over. "We are becoming ever increasing sophisticated death machines," intones the voice. The percussion, a steady hard beat, but I find the synth work amazing, blending in and out of that beat as it does. The voice over carries it out to the end.

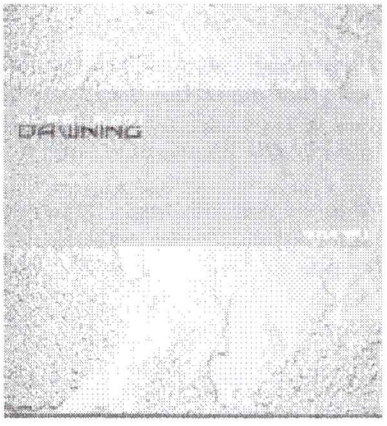
A lot of different styles are embraced in **Weld**. I am impressed with the Jazz Fusion and Acid Rock overtones. It works well as dance music too.

Contact Information:
Post: Tone Casualties, 6353 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, CA, 90028
Web: http://www.tonecasualties.com



REVIEW: KUROI MORI – "DAWNING"

By Mike Ventarola



The latest underground buzz is for the band Kuroi Mori. **Dawning** is an odd collection of songs that range from dark, somewhat industrial to jazz-fusion. It is simply pointless to pigeonhole this into any one genre because they successfully blurred the lines. Music purists will probably discuss this until the end of time. Listeners however, will just kick back and enjoy the musical ride.

Time and Space is a trance like envelopment with a ominous recitation which nags like a bad unconscious reminder of all that one is trying to forget. The sound effects are sparse but well placed to give the track another spatial level. The admonishment to open your life and live it fully because NOW is all there is, passionately reflects this sentiment as it is shouted at the listener in some future style motivation. This is a rather odd track that will grow on listeners relatively fast after repeated listens.

Floating emanates with the similar tranquility one would expect from some of the tracks from My Scarlet Life. The music isn't goth or industrial, but has a dark atmospheric and electronic experimentation that defies genre labeling, yet is just over the edge of a form of darkwave to make it acceptable and enjoyable for the darkwave and ethereal fans.

Flip Light Cruiser has a haunted fighter jet feeling at the intro that segues into an experimental jazz like composition, similar to works from My Scarlet Life. *Choral Prelude BWV 639;* from the depth of jazz fusion from the previous track ,we are then plunged into a morose and well crafted piano solo with hints of elements from a ghostly realm weaving between the spheres. *I Said, He Said* reflects a drum and bass element married to haunted trip hop. The vocals on this track are nothing short of sublime, seductive and gently haunting. From tracks 5 through 9, it is almost as if the CD was designed for lovemaking during the quiet hours of the post midnight hour.

Circus delivers even more trip hop/drum and bass/electronic hybrids. The styles are broadly utilized that one could place this track in any number of genres, including modern jazz for its transitional quality. *Slow* has a more midnight jazz groove embodied with this track, similar to the atmospherics from *Flip Light Cruiser. I Feel* delivers a thematic track similar in style from those featured in police drama television shows that were infamous during the 1970's. *Dawning* combines the Asian elements of nature and music with incorporations of water drips, wind and hand chimes. The track conveys a musical collage of an opening of the heart and soul from some form of frozen internal tundra.

Dawning is an album of a variety of styles and sound that are quite expertly done. Those in the underground looking for darker fare would be advised to seek elsewhere. The work has minimal elements that would classify it as dark, but is rather heavy on the jazz, experimental hybrid that works efficiently, though may grate on some goth purists who want their tones as dark as possible. Some tracks have made it to a number of DJ playlists over the last few months. Given the trip hop, slow groove and drum & bass elements on some of the song, it is understandable how this could actually work in some underground clubs.

Kuroi Mori did not create an album to flail your arms around to, nor did it give any indication that it was meant for fans of that style. This work is introspective, simply asking the listening audience to mesh with sound in some symbiotic experience, as if in some mental tantric experience. The fact that some tracks have a bit of a dance element to them seems to be more of an after thought than an actual primary intention with the song conceptions. As a background album, particularly for the more adventurous, it works well for intimate moments. One could also seek some solace in the gentle rhythms to simply chill out with during the overcast and cloudy days where anything too boisterous would seem totally out of place.

Contact Information:
Website: http://www.pileup.com/lascaux

waningmoon.com

REVIEW: STEREOMUD – "PAIN : OLD MAN"

By Marcus Pan

In the world of mainstream rock, it's hard to find something different. I try very hard, hoping to find some music that I can present to you that isn't the same thing everyone else is doing. Today I bring your attention to Stereomud – but allow me to disclaim any success with the prior mentioned quest. Stereomud is pretty much the same thing on KRock (92.3, New York, NY) most of the time. But while Stereomud has a standard fare, commercialized aspect and sound to their music, and indeed this rings true as I've heard it more than once on commercial radio, their music has a sort of catchy appeal to it.

The band is made up of Erik Rogers on vocals, Corey Lowery on bass, John Fattoruso and Joey Z on guitars and Dan Richardson on drums. I'd love to be able to tell you where they started, where they came from and other nitty gritty, but I received this CD at an album release party (for Slayer no less...damn ammusing that) in NYC and it came sans press kit and with a pile of other CDs, most of which were booted from the Legends review schedule for being out of format.

Taken off of their debut album on Loud Records LLC (aka Columbia [twitch]), **Perfect Self**, from what I can tell with this promo single they seem to be in a lot of pain. Indeed, both songs cover this subject intimately. From *Pain* itself to *Old Man* in which Erik pleads for the "old man to stop the pain." They're really hurting here. While the likes of Korn have already paved the way for this industrial-metalriffic, stompy-shouty style of music, Stereomud capitalize on this with aplomb. Solid rhythm, powerful lyrics, strong singing and catchy guitar riffs combine to provide a universal heavy metal sound that many can find enjoyable.

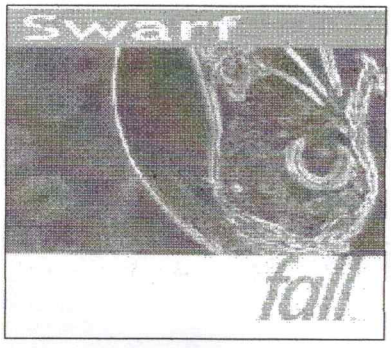
A word must be given to the totally cheesy blurbs on this promo jacket. The most comical thing about this promo is what it says here: "Stereomud is not your big brother's heavy band! It's not yesterday, but today and tomorrow. There are no carbon copies, cookie cutters or assembly lines here...etc." And if you paid attention during the course of this review, you know that's pretty much bullshit. Stereomud is the same thing Korn started, Slipknot picked up on and Rage Against the Machine added rap lyrics to. It's just done fairly well, which makes for decent listening, if a bit bland. If the new metal of the late 90s and today is any indication, it pays to be really pissed off and shout about it.

Overall it's quite simple. Don't feel like thinking introspectively or delving too deep into cosmic truths in your music today? AND in a bad mood? Play Stereomud. Instant aggression retractor. Catchy, stompy and you won't get hit with anything that requires a thought process. Remember the old dance the Pogo? Works well here, try it if you don't believe me.

Contact Information:
Web: http://www.stereomud.com

REVIEW: SWARF – "FALL"

By Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)
Photos by Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)



1.(n)the curly strips of metal waste you get from a lathe. Small, cute and shiny, but hard as nails.
2.(n)Brighton, England based 3 piece band

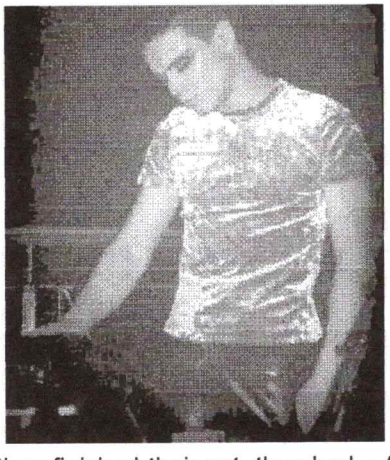
The first time I saw Swarf was at an Uncle Nemesis gig at the Underworld in London. I did photos of the bands for him to use for promotional purposes on his website, and I figured that I would be suffering through a few songs to get the photos and then head to the back bar area to escape some beginning band's racket. No one I knew had heard of them, so I was expecting the worst.

Well, I was in for a huge surprise, as were most of the people who showed up early

enough for the first band. The first song had me entranced. I stayed in front for their entire set, as did a majority of the people there. Liz's voice is what did it...so few industrial, and, even goth bands have a frontperson with such strong, beautiful, soaring vocals. By the end of their set, they had almost everyone who had arrived so far, up front, dancing and applauding. (For photos of this gig, see http://www.nemesis.to and go to August 2000.)

Many people (besides me) asked the band about a tape or CD. Unfortunately, there wasn't one. It turns out that this was only their 3rd or 4th live gig. Luckily, Lee from Wasp Factory was there to pester them about it, and succeeded in signing them to his label. This EP, **Fall**, is what has come of this so far. The EP includes *Fall*, *Vision* and *Sorrow* as well as 4 remixes of *Fall* done by label mates Chaos Engine, Exitboy, Tarantella Serpentine and Freudstein.

Fall (original version) reels you in with a catchy melody, and grabs you when Liz's vocals join in. If you aren't dancing (or at least hopping around a bit) when this is on, then you must be dead. *Vision* is a bit slower and swoopy, but that is no bad thing. Liz's vocals really shine here, and one is given an idea of how impressive a Swarf live performance is simply by hearing her voice. *Sorrow* is a change of tempo, a slow ballad. The synths maintain a melancholy atmospheric sound which accentuates the lyrics.



Fall (chaosphere) gives the title track a slightly heavier, more techo feel than the original. A floor-filler for those who like to bounce! *Fall (falls apart)* warps the original totally, twisting it into a gabba-esque free-for-all. *Fall (dirty little fucker)* also tweaks the original in such a way to have you thinking "is this the same song?" over and over again. This version is almost an instrumental, it uses Liz's voice sparingly. *Fall (freudstein)* has a bit more of a Dario Argento soundtrack feel to it, which reflects Freudsteins' sound.

Swarf recently appeared at Eurorock, a 3 day gothic, industrial and death metal festival in Neerpeldt, Belgium along with most of the Wasp Factory label bands. They went onstage in late afternoon during Nina Hagen's set (on the next stage over), and, during breaks in Nina's set, lured many punters to their stage. By the time they finished their set, they had a full area of dancing, screaming new-found fans. As far as I know, they were the only band to be able to give an encore that weekend simply because of the sheer amount of cheering and yelling after their set. The majority of people who were there had never seen them or heard of them before this performance, and were won over completely. The babble of excited comments in various languages proved that they have universal appeal.

Swarf are preparing for a full CD soon, which is anxiously awaited by many people in Europe. I hope that the rest of the world picks up on them-I feel that they could be massive! Swarf will be performing at the November Whitby Gothic Weekend as well as various other gigs around England. A word to the wise: future Convergence committees and US gothic/industrial promoters...give this band a listen, and book 'em!

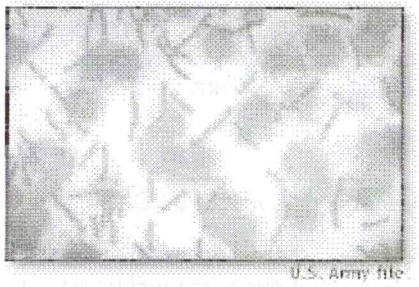
Contact Information:
Post: Swarf, Flat 2, 8 Norrfolk Terrace, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 3AD, England
E-Mail: lizandrew.swarf@virgin.net
Web: http://www.swarf.org.uk

www.mearlittleran.com Click Spaz! The Mean Little Site

THE MEAN LITTLE COLUMN – "ANTHRAX"

Its been a wild month since September 11. Just to clarify. This is Osama Bin Ladin.

He sends us Anthrax.



I suggest we return the favor and send Afghanistan a little Anthrax of our own.

You send infected letters? We say, "Turn it up. Bring the Noize."

Watching CNN all weekend I got to see a lot on the Taliban and Mr. Bin Ladin. I got a real good glimpse of the Afghanistan Government. It seems the International community got together a couple years ago and built the Afgani people a football stadium. We call it soccer. They have their football and Anthrax, we have our own. I like ours better.

Instead of playing soccer/football in it they use it to execute people in front of fervent crowds. I never thought I'd see a man hanging from the goal post. Well I always thought it would be Norwood after blowing the '91 super bowl, but I always thought that would be self-inflicted.

The strange irony is that they use the penalty area to for executions by gunfire. I never thought I'd see a woman get her head blown off for adultery. When Wendy cheated on me everyone thought I was excessive for calling her a heartless slut. I guess they just aren't enlightened like the Taliban.

I have to tell you, the Taliban foreign minister should go on tour with his act. I never laughed so hard. The world community builds the Afghanis a soccer stadium to try and lift their spirits. When asked how the world community should react to it being used for executions he responded, "If the world wants to build us a facility for our executions, we would be happy to use this place for football."

He went on to explain that stadiums are places for joyous activity. And what could be more joyous than a people getting together to enforce order and law. I mean what could be more joyous than cutting a man's throat for causing unrest by calling for democratic elections. Or beating a woman in the street because she was not being accompanied by a male relative.

Now I'm all for live and let live. If a country wants to build its culture around age-old traditions of being anti-science, anti-education, anti-equal rights, and anti-health, and beating its own people, that's fine by me.

We killed 12 civilians over the weekend. A part of me wants to say 5,388 more to go. I can't do that. But as I said before, I don't like wearing a target. So we're going to take the mess that was Afghanistan's rubble and turn it into smaller rubble. Then we'll come in and build the country. We'll help with things like ending leprosy, providing a better natal survival rate than 80%, and bring books that show the world really is round.

It does amaze me that they think we'll cower. We are Americans. We are a bloodthirsty lot. We love to fight. But we're also a moral people. We never need a reason to fight, but we do need a reason if we're going to feel good about it.

Hey Bin Ladin. Wanna know who you fucked with? I'll clue you in. Watch Battlebots. Robotic machines of maiming and destruction built by people as a hobby. This is shit we do in our spare time. Call Chuck D. Flava Flav and Professor Griff. Griff's already dressed for the occasion and Flava can easily keep the timetables of the attack. Turn it up. Bring the Noize.

10/10/01, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
In light of current events, we are changing the name of the band to something more friendly, "Basket Full Of Puppies." Actually, just the fact that we are making jokes about our name sucks.

In the twenty years we've been known as "Anthrax," we never thought the day would come that our name would actually mean what it really means. When I learned about anthrax in my senior year biology class, I thought the name sounded "metal." Everyone in my neighborhood had a band with an "er" name, like "Ripper" or "Deceiver" or "Killers" and I wanted to be different. "Anthrax" sounded cool, aggressive, and nobody knew what it was. Until a few years ago most people thought we'd made it up. Even our 1985 album, **Spreading The Disease,** was just a play on the name. We were spreading our music to the masses.

Before the tragedy of September 11th the only thing scary about Anthrax was our bad hair in the 80's and the **Fistful Of Metal** album cover. Most people associated the name Anthrax with the band, not the germ. Now in the wake of those events, our name symbolizes fear, paranoia and death. Suddenly our name is not so cool. To be associated with these things we are against is a strange and stressful situation. To us, and to millions of people, it is just a name. We don't want to change the name of the band, not because it would be a pain in the ass, but because we hope that no further negative events will happen and it won't be necessary. We hope and pray that this problem goes away quietly and we all grow old and fat together.

Be safe,
Scott, Charlie, Frank and John
AKA

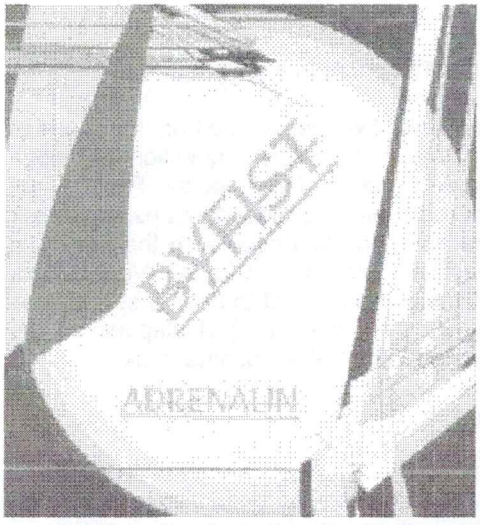
PS - If an Anthrax member gets anthrax, call Alanis Morrisette. That would be ironic. *Don't you think?*

Hugs and Smooches,
The Mean Little Man on 10-21-2001

For music, yelling, spiked hair and strange dress, visit The Mean Little Man at his official shrine on the web! http://www.meanlittleman.com.

REVIEW: BYFIST – "ADRENALIN"

By Dan Century



Even if Byfist was the lamest wrinkled sack of poseurs on the planet I would have to give them a good review for their press kit alone. Their logo, an armored fist ramming through the cover of the press kit, reminds me of a thousand metallic doodles I myself crafted on many a middle and high school notebook. The press kit is bound in a blood red transparent colored plastic binder, the kind you would submit your high-school English reports in. Every thing about Byfist, both their press kit and the brutal, punishing metal they forge, reminds me of high school – way back when I could beat you, and deservedly so, with a ball-peen hammer, and not go to jail because I was still under age.

Byfist is the type of raw savage metal that makes me want to drink Jack Daniels, smoke cigarettes, smash TVs and drive like a jackass! Sure I do all that already, but now I have a soundtrack to drink, smoke, smash and drive to. I ask you, how can you go wrong with song titles like *Eternal Damnation, Meltdown* and *Left To Die*?!? Every drum beat is like the pounding of a thousand demon's hooves! Each solo is like the screams of Valkyries! Each bass riff rumbles like an awakening volcano, and every brutal guitar riff is like rounds of depleted uranium fired from a M61A1 Vulcan cannon! Vocalist Vikk Real sings like a Viking warrior leading his troops to war – and VICTORY (victory screamed in falsetto)!

I love this kind of music because it makes me feel young again! I feel like I could take on the world! I could mow the lawn in under ten minutes and drink every last bottle of my old man's Shiner Bock (if he drank Shiner Bock).

Pure shredding brutal METAL is alive and well in Texas. If you're in the San Antonio area and you want a raw dose of American steel, go see the band called Byfist!

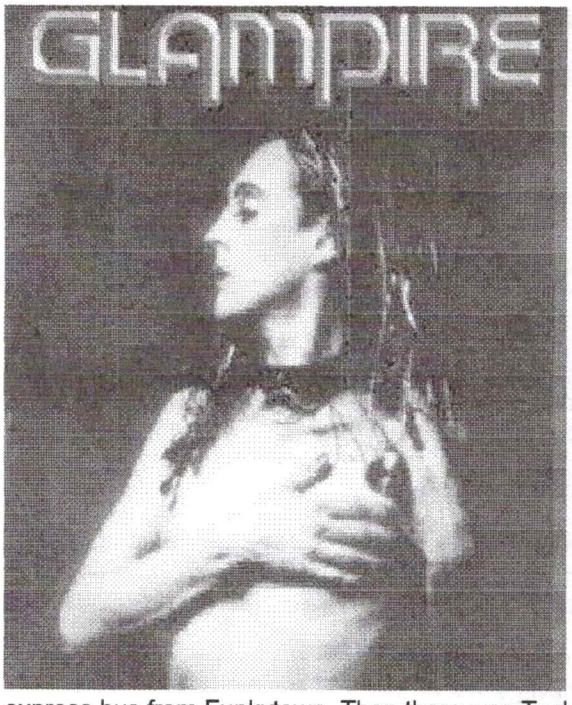
Contact Information:
Post: SABA Records, P.O. Box 1098, Helotes, Texas 78023
Phone: (830) 510-6994
E-Mail: SabaRecords2000@yahoo.com

HIDDEN SANCTUARY

The PARKING LOT is FULL
An Alternative Comic Strip for Deviants

REVIEW: GLAMPIRE – "DROP DEAD GORGEOUS"

By J 'Hirez' H-R



I tried hard to like this. Really I did. Things start well enough with Madchester-baggy-shuffle beat and a guitar sound not unlike someone carelessly throttling a brass cat, but the tune reminds me of the Levellers and that dreadfully earnest 'wouldn't the world be better if we all sat down and knitted our own yogurt together?' attitude goes down about as well as a Babycham in a biker bar hereabouts.

It's downhill from there. The second track has some splendidly eighties brass stabs – think Animotion or Go West – which I care for, and the whole reminds me strongly of Material. Though I suspect that Bill Laswell would call the police if I mentioned as much in his hearing. But by now the game is up and this record's (CD's, album's, whatever) true core is revealed:

It wants to be the Red Hot Chilli Peppers in a goth fright-wig.

Which probably makes some kind of warped sense from the inside of a Vast Recording Conglomerate, but is likely a questionable move from where I'm sitting. I have a healthy dislike for the RHCPs, not only for their (sock on) cock-rock antics, or indeed just because their preppie/frat-scum fans were about the last people on the planet I'd willingly mix with, but because they just Weren't Very Good. Fishbone were doing much the same thing at the same sort of time and were funkier than a funky thing that had just stepped off the express bus from Funkytown. Then there was Tackhead who defined politically-aware dub-metal-industrial-funk.

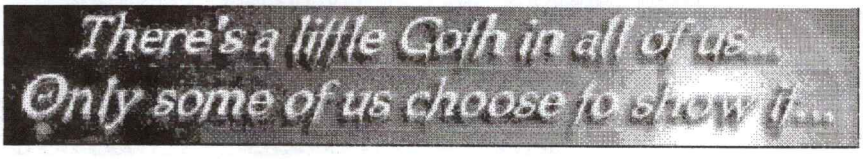
But we were considering Glampire, rather than railing against the mistakes of history.

Further into the recording, we find that proceedings have thankfully become rather less polished, though there's still too much airbrushed jazzy guitar-noodling – if you've just thrashed out some handfuls of crunchy guitar, keep the damn distortion screwed down rather than going for the button marked 'fey.' Not that there's anything wrong with noodly-jazz, but it's best when seriously unhinged, rather than just being 'a bit wacky' so as not to scare off those rooted in 4/4 time.

As we spiral toward the close, things do become rowdier – as if the band were desperate to get to the pub for last shout and just banged the last few tracks out in a bit of a temper. But since Glampire would seem to be one chap slaving over a home studio, that can't be the case. Strange.

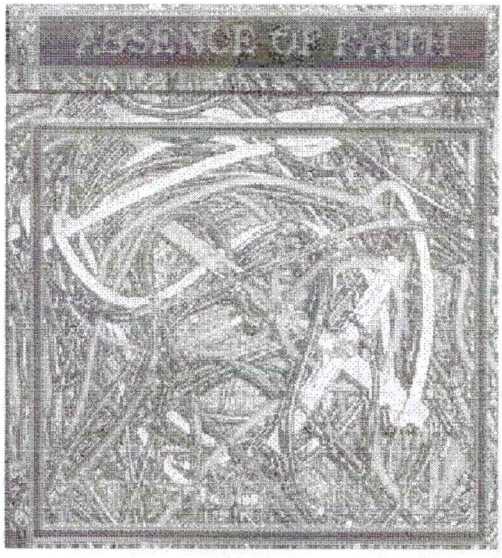
Conclusion – If there's a subgenre called 'beard-stroking jazz-funk with shouty-guitar bits for people who aren't sure about this goth thing and don't want to offend their friends' then this recording fits in well. Personally, I shall be digging out my Squarepusher, Material and Tackhead records when I get home.

Contact Information:
Post: Musesick Productions Inc., 511 Sixth Ave. #133, New York, NY, 1011-8436
E-Mail: musesickpr@earthlink.net
Web: http://www.glampire.com



REVIEW: ABSENCE OF FAITH – "THE NEW BEGINNING"

By Chris Eissing



I'm not going to overly mince words. If you're really into synth-driven industrial this might tweak your throbber. Musically it is adequate. At moments it is complex, seeming to be a melding of Nine-Inch-Nails influence and Early Depeche Mode (I'm talking really old Depeche Mode, like in **A Broken Frame**) sophistication.

No ground is broken. However, it is competent Industrial. Musically there are some genuine bright spots, like *Unholy* or *Lex Satanicus*. The weakness of the compilation, though, is in the vocals. William J. Butler, the sole soul of Absence of Faith, does great rhythmic distorted vocals, as in *Judgement*, and they are well-blended with the songs. But his regular vocals commonly slip off-key, and are often over-processed and under-confident. This is seen in lyrical vocals of songs like *Judgement, Visions, Ad Majoram Satanae Gloriam*. The namesake track, *Absence of Faith*, is by far the strongest. Mixing techno rhythms, industrial vocals, and a well-included chick.

The New Beginning does deliver the anti-Christian nihilism one would expect from a band by the name Absence of Faith. It dances close to the edge of being over the top with its Satanic tones and imagery. If this album is an expression of Mr. Butler's wrestling with faith, denouncing Christianity, and his embrace of Satanism I give him great props for undertaking such a daring artistic expression. If the Satanism is thrown in to enhance the dark ambience of the compilation I'd be most disappointed.

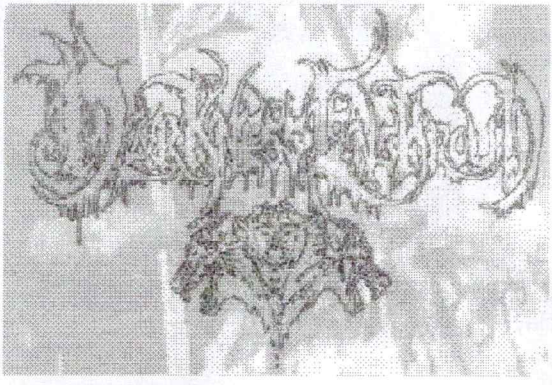
If one of this Band's songs was in a movie, what would it be? I can see the song *Absence of Faith* as the obligatory techno-industrial song in a *Matrix* rip-off. Probably starring Peter Weller or Charlie Sheen. Whichever one has less of a career at that point in time. That is, of course, if Keefer Sullivan isn't available.

The album is above-average musically. The rhythmic and distorted vocals are pulled off wonderfully, but the lyrical vocals bog this album down. Also, there are sampled voices that begins and ends this album that seems totally out of place. If one can find their namesake track on download it is worth it, otherwise, look for their next album. Their deficiencies are not for lack of talent or want, simply experience, and will to improve.

Contact Information:
E-Mail: gothicbastard@hotmail.com
Web: http://www.absenceoffaith.net

REVIEW: DARKNESS ENSHROUD – "TOTENTANZ"

By Pat Hawkes-Reed (GothPat)



Unusual packaging...well thought out...aesthetically pleasing...but what about the most important thing – the music?

I wasn't so sure if I would like this at all. The description given was "dark ambient" – not a genre I am particularly into.

The group consists of two people: Michael Ford and Shanna LeJuene (who joined Michael on the second Darkness Enshroud album **Unveiled Ghostly Shadows**). Michael currently is involved with Valefor and Psychonaut and Shanna has a solo release called **Nythra**.

Basically, it is a side project of Michael Ford who is in an occult metal

group, Black Funeral. This is the third release under the name Darkness Enshroud which was mastered by Barry Galvin (Mephisto Walz/Christian Death).

Track listing and thoughts:

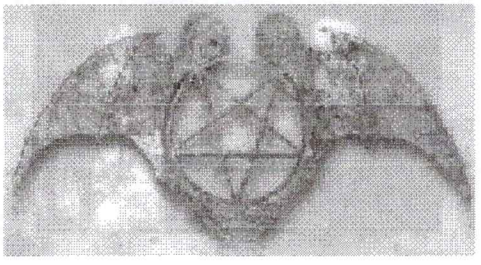
Totentanz...a good possibility for a goth club's ethereal set.

Immortal Manifestation (Finsternis II)...lovely use of church-like organ sounds mixed with echoed female vocals.

A Hymn to a Melancholy Angel...horror film background music, very atmospheric and evil.

Mirror of Nekalah...didn't care for this too much.

The Stars Align to Dispel Equality...strong tune with organ, vocals are moody and introspective.



Age of Blood and Fire...edgy melancholy.

A Rose Upon a Coffin...I didn't like this very much.

Transference of Aeonic Energies...very industrial sounding-I was reminded of the factory sounds on the soundtrack of **Eraserhead** more than NIN, though. I thought this was the best song on the CD, probably because of the film reference.

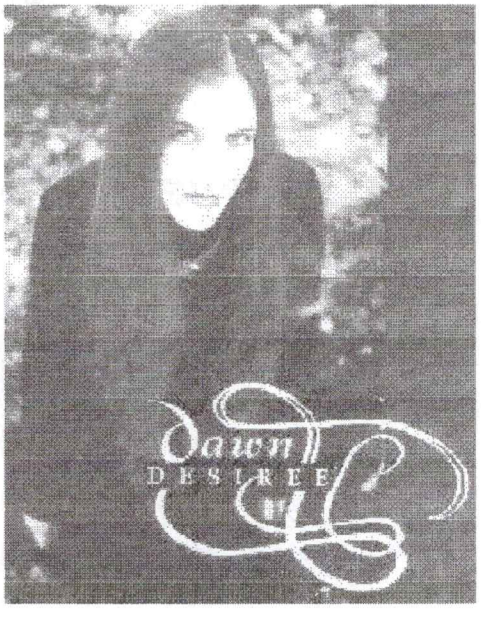
If you have an interest in occult metal or dark ambient music, then this is the CD for you.

Contact Information:
E-Mail: Nachttoter@aol.com yamatu@erols.com
Web: www.erols.com/tshh/fdungeon

REVIEW: DAWN DESIREE – "DAWN DESIREE"

By Mike Ventarola

The Fossil Dungeon is the brainchild of the Riddick Brothers of The Soil Bleeds Black fame. Among the label's new releases is the enchanting Dawn Desiree, a young lady with an amazing soprano voice coupled with expert piano and keyboard skills. The vocals are accompanied by piano and keyboard almost exclusively, thereby making the tracks rather crossover friendly for even pagan goths. Desiree was previously known for her vocal work in the atmospheric metal band, Rain Fell Within and now ventures forth with this showcase for her talents, demonstrating her penchant for moving, love-lost poetry.



Dreams is a simple vocal and piano track, which has a crossover proclivity that would even garner fans of opera. Desiree utilizes her vocals to the fullest, providing all the power in her young voice. *Where Are You Now* continues with the piano & operatic flavor. This song would probably have been better placed further down, as the similarity in the styles from the first track manages to somehow negate the beauty of each until you have listened to the CD for a few times to become enmeshed in the poetic beauty.

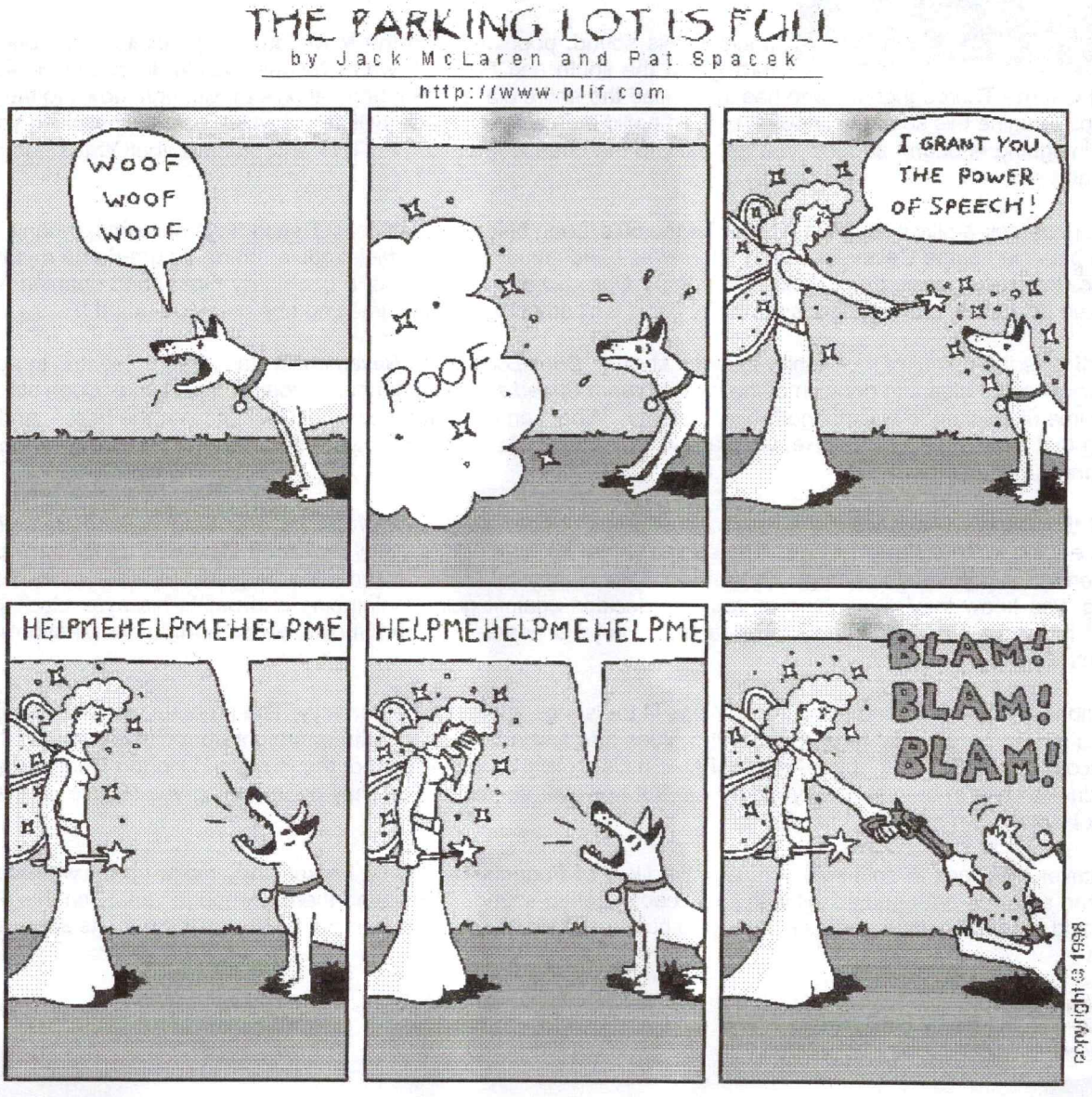
While I Lay Here, is a major gem which incorporates multi-layered vocal choruses, harking to a bygone era while still transporting the listener into the modern day moment. In essence, it is a timeless track that would have played well 100 years ago, and most likely will be that way 100 years from now.

My Eyes Are Closed carries the emotion and mood with the utilization of harpsichord sounds and reverberated vocals. This provides a melancholy snapshot almost gleaned from a moment locked behind a castle wall. *Thy Painted Garden* delivers haunting Celtic somberness that is sadly too short, but delightful nonetheless.

Desiree has a rather wide operatic octave range, which is sure to bring her much recognition as one of the best "newcomers" to the gothic ethereal genre. To some untrained ears the operatic vocals may be a bit disconcerting in light of the minimal instrumentation available, however, those who find much solace in the soothing and healing power of the female voice will glory in this endeavor. This 5 song EP has a limited pressing and is worth investigating simply for the enchantment that Desiree is surely going to be providing on future releases.

This CD is packaged in an oversized 5x7" sturdy plastic sleeve with a beautifully colored trifold insert that is quite novel and space saving on the shelf. DJ's around the globe will be thrilled with this design for its functionality.

Contact Information:
Email: dawndesiree@aol.com
Website: www.erols.com/tsbb/fdungeon



Page 33 – Copyright © 2001 by Marcus Pan. Copy but do not modify.

REVIEW: CULT OF THE PSYCHIC FETUS – "SHE DEVIL"

By Chris Eissing

So you're stuck on a road trip with Grandma. She likes the good old Sha-Na-Na cruising music from the 50's. You like the dark stylings of Goth where the moods are bleak and the bodies are cold. Normally this would be an 800 mile equivalent of repeated blows to your temple with a 9-iron. A buzzkill on par with a stake through the heart. But never fear! Cult of the Psychic Fetus is here! Proof positive you can put the groovy back in ghoulies.

She-Devil is as complete an album as could be made for a band whose style floats in the nebulous grey region between goth-a-billy and surf-goth. If that doesn't pique your interest, let's look a little deeper into the terms 'goth-a-billy' and 'surf-goth.' Goth-a-billy, rock-a-billy, punk-a-billy, and anything-a-billy you can think of comes from one general place. Hillbilly rock of the early-50s. Back then they tried to dress-down the sound of white artists doing black music by adding a hillbilly backbeat; making it a hybrid of guitar-rock blues, and two-steppin country.

Imagine this sound, popularized in the road-houses, gin joints, and honky-tonks throughout the south and Midwest, who's heroes include John Lee Hooker, Les Paul and George Thoroughgood, who has influenced the entire classic-rock generation's music, right down to the beards of ZZ Top. Imagine this sound is adopted by bald pallid men wearing black eyeliner, vinyl shirts, and lipstick. If you don't find that intriguing enough I suggest you get back to the Grease marathon on TNT and practice your YMCA for the club Friday night.

Coming out of rock-a-billy was the surf music of the 50's. Long before the left coast Beach Boys brought harmony and do-wop to a bleached blond California culture there was beach music. The unmistakeable um-da-da um-da-da rhythm most easily recalled from classic drum-busters like *Wipe Out*. So if the thought of a classically Goth band donning a sound popularized by muscle cruising cars and hillbilly blues isn't amusing enough, imagine one on a surf board.

She Devil runs the gamut of rock-a-billy inspired styling. *Don't Look in the Basement* is classic surf, updated to appeal to your average coffin-sleeping denizen of the dark. *Dream Speed* evokes a dark afterworld where James Dean still plays a nightly game of chicken to suicidal goth-billy-rhythms. What can I say but "*Cannibal Girls* all taste the best." And finally, in a song that is also their namesake, we learn what the *Cult of the Psychic Fetus* is. It's one of the strongest and more daring songs on the album.

If one of this Band's songs was in a movie, what would it be? I see Cult of the Psychic Fetus's song *HateKill* in the alternate ending to *The Breakfast Club*. The ending where Michael Anthony Hall realizes that he was duped into doing the assignment so everyone else can go do the Brat Pack Horizontal Mambo. And once he gives into the voices that keep repeating "you know they're laughing at you," he decides against going Columbine and paints his eyes black with the ashes of his straight-A report card, forms a band, buys a hearse and this movie becomes Marilyn Manson's Velvet Underground.

The sound is crystal clear, and the guitar stylings fit the songs and the style perfectly. The problem with any 'a-billy' style is that it's limited by its strict form. Strict 1-4-5 blues riffs and arrangement with a straight-up rock beat makes the style easily recognizable. But Cult of the Psychic Fetus pulls it off. It is reminiscent of the Reverand Horton Heat in the way it uses a classic style to create gloomy giddiness. But however seductive Cult may be in getting you to give up their soul, they lack Heat's down-right Satanic playing.

For whatever they lack in soul-sold virtuosity the likes of Paganini or Charlie Parker, they make up for with absolutely solid, clean and well-arranged songs with impeccable crafted sounds. However, there is enough variety on this album to get it to hold its own on your tape rack. It may be purchased for its novelty factor, but it will stay there for its sheer ability to entertain.

Contact Information:
E-Mail: ravenmusicgroup@ravenworldwide.com
Web: http://www.ravenworldwide.com

INTERVIEW: VOLTAIRE

By Rat Bastard

During my all-too brief jaunt to NYC for Convergence (the annual net.goth gathering), I managed to arrange an interview with NYC's gothic renaissance man, Voltaire. This was actually more of a challenge than one might think, as I had to break away from the confines of the drunken haze that I was in for a sizeable portion of the weekend, so that I could conduct a semi-coherent interview. With that accomplished (with at least a certain degree of success), I was able to meet up with Voltaire on the final day of Convergence. After taking command of a piano on the second floor of the Warwick Hotel, Voltaire discussed his past, present, future, and whatever else came to mind, in the hour-long chat that ensued:

RB: I'll start with a nice generic question: How did you get your start as a musician and artist?

V: It's hard to say, because I've always drawn. My grandmother tells me that, as far back as I could hold an pencil, I'd always be drawing. She'd always point out that I started with the tail. I'd literally draw the animal, starting with the tail, and work my way forward. I suppose I was always attracted to drawing, art, and things of that nature. At some point, I saw the films of Ray Harryhausen (*7th Voyage of Sinbad, Jason and the Argonauts*, etc), and I really just fell in love with stop-motion animation. I got a Super8 camera when I was 10 and started making stop-motion films. The beginning of being a musician probably happened for me around junior high school, when I started a band. We were probably absurdly awful, but we thought that we were pretty good at the time.

RB: What was your band called?

V: It was called First Degree. We played covers of Judas Priest, Rush, and Duran Duran. We played in junior high/high school talent shows, battle of the bands, and things like that.

RB: Well, playing Rush covers would require some degree of talent. I guess? (chuckles)

V: Not if you play them very badly. (smiles) Anyway, it was all just something that came very natural to me. While all of the other boys were outside playing baseball, I was drawing...which made me a "freak."

RB: So, you were 10, making films with your Super8 camera. At what point did people start to take notice?

V: People actually started to take notice right away, because there was this 10 year old kid making stop-motion films. That was a little creepy to them, I think. Especially since, in the first film that I made, I created this little clay monster and animated him behind this big laser cannon, which was shooting. The lasers were actually pieces of wire that I would hold into the frame for one frame. When the film got developed, we were all sitting in the living room, with my parents and a few other people. The first half of the film was a family reunion that I shot, so they're all sitting there watching, when, all of a sudden, this green alien with a laser cannon appears and starts shooting...and everyone lost their fucking minds. They all turned to me and said, "How did you do that?" At that point, I thought, "I want to be a stop-motion animator! This is great!" So I started making more films. I generally refused to read books or do homework, but I graduated from high school a year early with flying colors. It was largely due to the fact that, instead of doing book reports, I'd just make a super8 film and show that in class, and just the novelty of showing a film usually got me an A, even though it didn't necessarily have anything to do with the book that I read (just a little tip for you kids out there!).

RB: Where exactly did this happen?

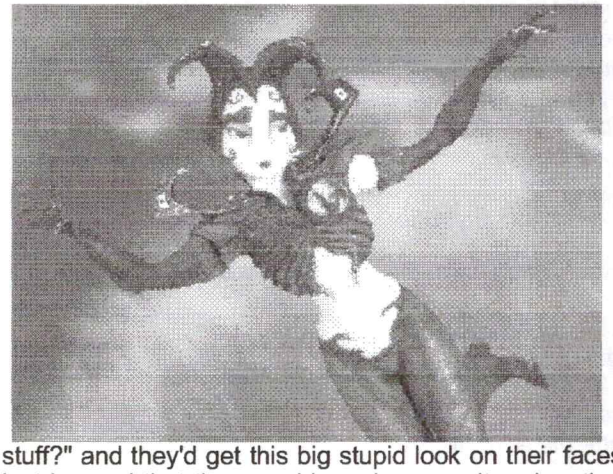
V: I was born in Cuba. But all of this nonsense took place in the suburban sprawl of New Jersey. People did take notice right away and made a big fuss about it, and I think that this encouraged me as a child to later take it more seriously, because it seemed like I was on to something.

Copyright © 2001 by Marcus Pan. Copy but do not modify.

RB: At what point did you get involved with MTV?

V: Well, when I was 17, I left home because living at home sucked something awful. I started growing out my hair and got an earring, and that alone made pretty big waves at home. So, I moved to Manhatten, and needed to find a job. The woman I was living with said to me, "You're an animator. Why don't you go to an animation studio and show them your work?" It had never occurred to me that someone would pay me to do stop-motion animation. It was just something that was so much fun and that I loved so much, and you generally think of work as something that you don't want to have to do, because it's "work," and this, to me, was "play." So I went to this company, and I showed them my films and they hired me. So, at 17, I worked on animating Parker Brothers commercials and Budbowl. Then, two years later, MTV contacted my animation studio. They were looking for station IDs that were kinda dark and weird, and the people from my studio were like, "Oh boy, do we have a dark and weird guy for you!" And so they gave me an ID to direct. I came up with an idea to do one based on "The Garden of Earthly Delights" by Hieronymous Bosch. I had to do it mostly myself, because the studio didn't give me a lot of money with which to produce this piece, but it won a couple of awards in 1988, and I thought to myself, "Wow! I'm a young hotshot director! I'm going to be rich and famous!"... then shortly after, I realized that the road to success is a much longer and harder one than I thought it would be.

RB: Do you see CG, being the current 'big thing' in special effects, as a threat to stop-motion animation?



V: There is no question that it is, was, and probably will continue to be a threat to stop-motion animation, in the sense that, from 1985 to 1990, I was working every day. I don't think I had a single day off. It was insane. Nearly every TV commercial had stop-motion in it. Around 1991, CG made a sudden leap. In many ways, CG is more convenient than stop-motion. After all, if you screw up in stop-motion, you have to do the shot all over again. In CG, you'd just need to go back and fix that one little screw-up. So, producers like it because it can save them a lot of money. Directors like it because it gives them more flexibility in changing things around. In any case, as of 1991, I couldn't even get arrested. I don't think I worked a single day in 1991. It was a really harsh switch-over, because the advertising world is very much about trends and catch-phrases. I'd walk into an ad agency, show them my reel, and they'd say, "Do you do any of that CG stuff?" and they'd get this big stupid look on their faces when they said "CG" because it was a "new term" that they had just learned that they would say because it makes them seem cool. So, yeah, CG killed stop-motion in the commercial world, and put a lot of stop-motion animators out of work. I think that there was a period of time after 1991 in which I was the only stop-motion animator in New York City, out of a couple hundred. They all either moved or switched occupations. I just stubbornly stuck around because I didn't feel like doing anything else. Though, I think that this ended up doing stop-motion a favor, because, since stop-motion was no longer needed in the commercial world, stop-motion animators who really believed in the artform had to find some other venue to implement their craft in, and hence, the stop-motion art film became very popular. Suddenly, all of these animation festivals popped up, that were full of beautiful stop-motion films by Jan Svankmajer, The Brothers Quay, and others. Now, stop-motion has its own little 'return to its roots' as an artform with a quirky, surrealistic, and (dare i say it) fine art feel.

RB: The Chi Chian series, which you did for Scifi.com, has a very stop-motion look,

V: Well, when I was approached to do an animated series by the Scifi channel for their website, I wanted to try to do something with stop-motion. I knew that it was going to be a problem putting that on the internet, but goddammit, I was going to make it work one way or the other. So, I started looking into Flash, and noticed that Flash is basically all done with vector art, which is flat cartoonlike art, and I wanted to do something that was photographic, which would use bitmaps. But Flash doesn't like bitmaps, because each little bitmap makes the file size bigger and bigger, until the file size is so big that no one would be able to download it. I went to several Flash production studios for help on this project, and no one wanted to touch it. Literally, people said "You are out of your mind. You cannot do an entire series that

is photographic in Flash." Eventually I ran into two guys, Michael Lee and Daniel Govar. The two of them put together the series. It has a very photographic stop-motion Harryhausen look, or rather, a Harryhausen-meets-anime look. It also owes a lot to the Terry Gilliam Monty Python photo collage-type style. I took photos of the stop-motion models. Then I cut the digital photos up into pieces using Photoshop, sort of like a paperdoll. Then I would email those pieces to the animators, who would animate them, two dimensionally, in Flash. It's exactly the same technique used to animate South Park, except that ours strives to look like a Sinbad film, directed by Tim Burton in Japan.. while South Park is South Park.

RB: Chi Chian began as a comic book series, and I noticed that there was a wealth of background information in the Flash series. How far back does that go? Are the comics still available anywhere?

V: I started drawing the Chi Chian comic book in around 1996. It was published by Sirius in 97, and they commissioned a six issue series to be published bi-monthly. So, by the end of 98, the entire series had come out. Slowly, the comics started falling out of print.

RB: Any plans for a graphic novel?

V: There were plans for one years ago. But the contract expired. Then I went on to do the animated series. However, I'm again working with that same publisher for my new "Oh My Goth!" book. So there still could be a graphic novel in the future, but it remains to be seen.

RB: Perhaps the animated series will increase interest in Chi Chian and make that more likely to happen.

V: Well there is some talk about the possibility of a Playstation game. If that happens, then I will be the happiest man alive, because getting to work with Chi Chian every day for 10 months was the best year of my career. I just love that girl, and I like to work with her. Heh, I talk as if she's a real person, but she kind of is.

RB: Is she based upon anyone in particular?

V: She's an amalgam of a few different people. Basically, she represents innocence, which is something that I really really love. Children are really innocent. They say things that reveal this innocence, and it almost makes you want to cry, because you know that, at some point, somewhere down the line, they will realize that things aren't the way they think they are. And that's a dynamic that I find really interesting and that I like to work with. Anyway, that's what Chi Chian represents to me, and I'd like to continue working with her.

RB: So, you are planning to expand the series?

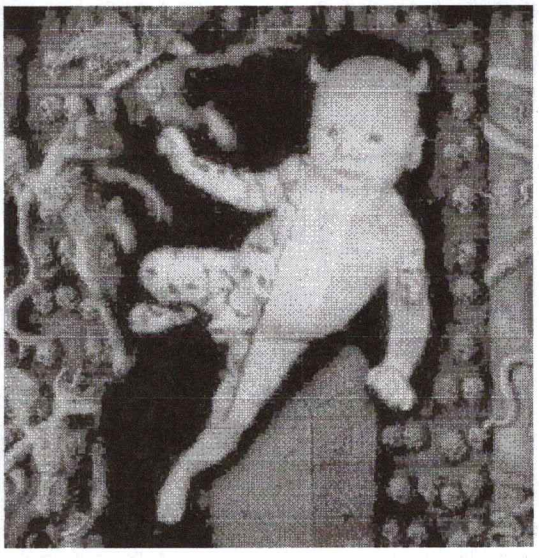
V: I don't know about expanding the series, though there is always the possibility that SciFi might want to continue the series online when they start planning their roster for next year. But, right now, I'm just pursuing the Playstation game idea and looking into other opportunities.

RB: As I mentioned earlier, there is a wealth of background information in the Chi Chian series. For example, you've got a several page long writeup on the characters, Ick and Nuff. Then, when they make their appearance in the series, they get killed almost immediately. So it seems like you've got a lot of history within every bit of the story.

V: Yes, there is a huge amount of background for Chi Chian. I came up with the idea when I was working in Tokyo, in 1989, but I didn't start drawing the comic book until 1996. I'd be working on TV commercials during the day, and well into the night (and sometimes two or three days at a time), but when I'd relax, I'd go into a cafe, where I'd sit and write and draw on napkins. I'd always draw Chi Chian and I was always writing about Chi Chian. So this world was expanding on a weekly, monthly, and yearly basis, until 1996, when I thought to myself, "Jesus Christ, I've got this huge saga! It's time to do something!" So, in the animated series online, because the files are large and could take 15 minutes or so to load on a 56k modem, we had to include loaders to entertain people while they were waiting. So we decided to use the background information on the characters. For the main characters, all I had to do was transcribe the information from the comic series. But when I ran out of main characters, I needed some new ones, so I'd go to Yaffa Cafe, where I'd draw "Oh My Goth!" all night long. I'd eventually get back to my place at 5AM and I'd be in a coffee-induced frenzy, so I'd start writing background information for characters that would go online in about an hour... and that's how I wrote almost all of the backgrounds for the characters in the animated series who do not appear in the comic. I would generally try to come up with a story that had an immeasurable amount of pain and anguish in it, because I figured that, if these guys are bad,

they're probably bad for a reason. They probably started out as really sweet kids and then somebody fucked with them really badly, and that's the motivation behind a lot of those background stories.

RB: You said earlier that you played music in high school. When did you start playing music similar to your current style?



V: After I moved to Manhattan, in 1984, I continued to play music, but I never thought about it being a career or about going out and playing shows. I did it pretty much just for my own entertainment. Around 1995, I moved into an apartment that had no electricity. It was really beautiful. It was completely candlelit. There was no phone or fax machine. It was very quiet. I realized very quickly in that place that I desperately needed something to entertain myself, because I didn't have a TV or a radio. A friend of mine gave me an acoustic guitar. So I figured out how to play it and started writing songs.

RB: So, what did you play in your high school band?

V: I just sang... which is really a difficult position to be in if you want to write music, because people expect there to be an accompanying instrument, so it's difficult to write music by yourself if you're just the singer. So, when I came up with melodies in my head, I would sing them into a cassette recorder. But, you know, people don't necessarily want to hear acapella versions of songs. So, in those first few months of 1995, I learned to play the guitar at least well enough to accompany myself, and I played my first acoustic solo show in March of 1995. I knew that I didn't want it to be a spooky ooky goth "i want to kill myself" sort of show, so I wrote in some funny stories and my songs were kind of sarcastic and tongue-in-cheek. I think that people were stunned. At first they weren't sure quite what to make of it. So there was a sea of black-clad people, holding their faces, trying not to smile in public, wondering if this is supposed to be funny. Then, about midway through the set they realized that this was, in fact, supposed to be funny, and it just took off from there.

RB: How did you get signed to Projekt?

V: I played solo acoustic shows from 95 to 96, and ironically enough, my demo had violin, cello, and other instruments on it, played by studio musicians. That's the way I had always heard my music. So I decided that it was time to put a band together. So I did this, and our very first show as a band was as the opening act for Christian Death and Switchblade Symphony. Those guys went back to Cleopatra and told them "Hey, you should check out the guys that opened for us in New York! They've got a very different sound and they were really funny." So we had conversations with Cleopatra over the next few months before we realized that it wasn't really the place for us, which is fine. Then, at some point, we played a show at the BatCave, opening for Black Tape for a Blue Girl. After the show, I gave away about 150 cassettes. One of those cassettes fell into the hands of Lisa Fuer, from Black Tape for a Blue Girl, who is also the wife of Sam Rosenthal, who owns the Projekt label. So, they popped the tape in on the way back to Chicago and listened to it. Ironically, that was the first time they had heard my music, because they were backstage dealing with band drama while I was playing my set, so they didn't actually get to hear any of it. Then I got a call from Projekt, saying that they were interested in seeing a showcase. So they came to New York, we played for them, and the rest is history. So far, I've put out two albums, **The Devils Bris** (1998) and **Almost Human** (2000). We're slated to put out a third record, called **Boo Hoo**, on Valentine's Day of 2002. It's a break up record.

RB: At your show last night, you mentioned your "Star Trek songs'... what are these?

V: Oh yeah. I'm a big Star Trek fan. I was at DragonCon last year, and some guy came up to me and asked, "Did you come here to Filk?" and I was like "Hey buddy, I'm not into that." (laughs). Anyway, I found out that filking is science fiction folk music, essentially. So I went in and was really amazed. There were all these people with acoustic guitars playing songs about Chewbacca and Klingons. And so my love of Star Trek and my love of music collided that night and I started writing Star Trek parody songs. So, I've got four Star Trek parody songs up on mp3.com. There's a Klingon rap. There's one about having sex with Data. We're actually releasing a disc of those

songs, limited to 1000 copies, called **Voltaire - Banned on Vulcan**. Because it's such a limited release, we'll probably just sell them at shows.

RB: Tell me about the "Oh My Goth!" comic.

V: "Oh My Goth!" has been going pretty well. I started out with a four issue mini-series, which was later compiled into a graphic novel. Then I started the second series, called "Humans Suck." Issue one came out...then issue two came out.. nd then I got into a big fight with the publisher, and they cancelled my contract. So, issue three never made it out. It was called "Vampires from Outer Space, or Halloween in Harlem", and was supposed to come out in October of 2000. Since then, I've kissed and made up with the publisher, and they are releasing a new version of the "Oh My Goth!" graphic novel, entitled "Oh My Goth! Version 2.0," and it contains the four previously released issues of "Oh My Goth!," the two previously released issues of "Humans Suck," plus the third issue of "Humans Suck" that never got to see the light of day.

RB: Ah, so it's The Complete "Oh My Goth!"...

V: Hey... I should have called it that (grins)... In any case, it will be in stores this December.

RB: "Oh My Goth!" has lots of characters that seem to embody many of the stereotypes in the goth scene. Are any of these characters based on particular people you've known or met?

V: Well, I draw my inspiration from people around me in the scene and, because I feel that everyone has the unalienable right to make a complete jack-ass out of themselves, I tend to get lots of free material. So, a lot of the people in "Oh My Goth!" are people I actually know, and many things said in 'Oh My Goth!" are things that I've actually heard. The bottom line is that I consider myself a goth, and I'm just making fun of "us." We just can't take ourselves so damn seriously. If there ever was a scene that takes itself too seriously, it's this one. So, I think it's important to look around and laugh.

RB: Yeah, it's like when a lot of people who I run into say things like "goth is about death and darkness and decay." This makes little sense to me. After all, if we sat around fixating on death and decay, then we wouldn't be able to go out to clubs, see bands, have fun, etc.

V: Exactly. It's like the whole "I'm all alone in world" thing. Yeah, you're all alone…with 25 of your friends at a goth club. Come on!

RB: So, you mentioned earlier that your upcoming album, **Boo Hoo**, is a breakup album...

V: Yeah, it's a breakup record. I just got out of a twelve year relationship...

RB: Ouch.

V: Yeah. Owie...so, for the last six months, I've been writing a lot of songs in that vein.

RB: Well, there are quite a few songs in that vein on your first album as well.

V: Ironically enough, I broke up with the same damn woman X number of years ago before I wrote that record! We broke up for the first time back in either 92 or 93. We were apart for about three years when I wrote **The Devil's Bris**...and then we somehow mysteriously ended up getting back together (which I honestly had believed was completely impossible). I guess I was feeling pretty good when I recorded **Almost Human**. It's more upbeat and lighter. Now…I feel like fuckin' shit again! Devil's Bris II, here I come!

RB: Speaking of **Almost Human**, the title track has a very Miltonesque take on the character of Lucifer. So, would you like to talk about Lucifer some. (grins)

V: I don't believe in the Devil. I think that anyone who calls himself a Satan worshipper is just a broke-ass Christian. In order to believe in Satan, you'd have to believe in Christianity, and I personally don't believe in either. That's not to say that God doesn't exist. I just don't have any personal information on that, and why should I? I'm a fucking puny human. Who the hell am I to think that I know about God, or his son, or whatever else people think that they know about him. So, yeah, I don't believe in the Devil, but I do find him fascinating, because he's such a colorful character. Between Heaven and Hell, Hell is a lot closer to where we are now, so it's a lot easier to relate to. Christians make it seem that the Devil is

just pure evil. People today are just really uncomfortable with grey areas. They make judgments, like "That boy with the black lipstick is EVIL," even though he may not have hurt a fly in his life, and meanwhile, "That businessman with the briefcase who went to church this Sunday is GOOD," even though he may be molesting his son at night. So, people look for quick and easy symbols, and end up simplifying everything, and it's not necessarily the right way to see reality. I think that that is what has happened with Lucifer. Lucifer was God's favorite angel. He was the angel that all of the other angels looked up to. But he was jealous of God's love for man, so he got booted out of Heaven. Now, you've got to imagine that, if you love God with all of your heart, and then you get booted out of Heaven, how much pain you must be in.

RB: It's kind of like something that I heard, to the effect of "You can only truly hate the people who you have truly loved."

V: But I don't think that it's really hate. I think it's more "I love that person so much, and they've cast me out of their life, so I hate them. Bbut only because I love them so much and they don't love me back." It's almost like an intensified version of love, twisted around.

RB: That turns him into a very tragic figure.

V: He's an extremely tragic figure. He's at least a realist. After all, we live on the physical plane, here on Earth, so we should be following our biological imperatives. If you feel sad, you should cry. You shouldn't feel that it's wrong to cry or be sad, as people will tell you, "You shouldn't be sad! You should be smiling! Hey, everybody smile!" If you feel horny, you should have sex. There's nothing wrong with sex. If it wasn't for sex, no one would be here. Likewise, if you feel like going out, getting drunk, and acting like a fool, then that's what you should do. I don't understand this whole crazy morality system based upon a fictitious place where we might go when we die. Fuck that. I'm more concerned with right here and right now. My philosophy is "don't step on other people's toes, don't hurt anybody, and do what your body tells you that you should do...and don't feel bad about it." Ironically enough, this is basically the teachings of Satanism. If you listen to the teachings of Anton LaVey, it's pretty much just that. Be kind to those who are kind to you. Fuck those who aren't (well, not literally). And I have to agree with that part of his teachings, at least.

RB: So, why did you choose the name Voltaire?

V: What makes you think that I chose the name Voltaire? You American fool. (grins)

RB: Er...well, is Voltaire your born-name?

V: Nah. Ya blew it. I shan't say. Next question. (grins)

RB: Er. Damn! (laughs)

V: Actually, I have a tremendous amount of respect for Voltaire. I don't think that there is any other human being who has been on this Earth who I so much relate to. The guy would give social commentary by satirizing people who did not at all want to be satirized. He got thrown in jail quite a few times for it. I just think that he was really on to something.

RB: I heard that you're collaborating with Neil Gaiman. Is this true?

V: That's what they tell me. We're working on a narrative circus. Neil Gaiman is writing the script. It's called "Circus of Night," and opens October 2002 in Los Angeles. He's writing a script, in which everyone dies, and I'm writing the score. They tell me that I'm also playing The Devil, which apparently involves wearing high heels, singing, and chopping someone in half...so basically, it's my average Friday night, so it shouldn't be too much of a stretch. So, those are the plans, as of right now. We're sort of in pre-production.

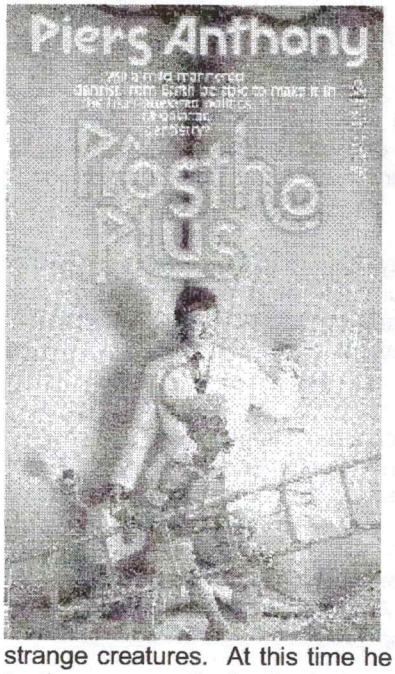
RB: So, any closing remarks? Words of Wisdom? Death threats?

V: Email me. I read every single email that I get, and I desperately try to respond to every last one of them. I don't always get a chance to (like when I go away for two days and come back to 500 emails), but I certainly read them all.

WWW.VOLTAIRE.NET

Off The Shelf – "Prostho Plus"

By Marcus Pan



Piers Anthony stepped up in the golden years of science fiction through the 70s and 80s. Through this period he established himself as one of SF's most prolific writers, turning out stand alone novels, short stories, multiple-book anthologies and more. Having received two boxes of SF and fantasy paperbacks from family that spanned this period of the genre's heyday, you can expect you'll see numerous looks at work by Piers Anthony in this column.

Prostho Plus is a less serious book. At the outset I found it rather banal and probably a bit less adventurous than I hoped. But then again, the story does happen to be about a prosthodontist who is picked up by aliens and shepherded around the world as a "tooth healer." I remember commenting to somebody that, "fifteen years ago, I would have loved this story." As it moved along however, it picked up somewhat, becoming more interesting as we were taken to different worlds where different life forms existed. I found many of them to be somewhat...well, stupid. Walking clams and sentient robots and everything that made a 70s-80s science fiction cheese thriller shine can be found here. Anthony throws the "science" part to the wind when designing his colorful and inventive characters. But if you can put down the origin of species level science, you may still find this a whimsical bit of adventure you might enjoy.

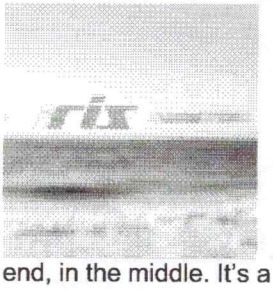
Anthony's writing style is smooth and easy. During some areas we find ourselves trapped with Dr. Dillingham, D.D.S., as he is working on various mandibulars of strange creatures. At this time he picks up on the "science" part of the genres name and harangues us with details on tooth care, prosthodontic devices and corrections to enamel. On more than one occasion he delves deep into this, proving he can do his research fairly well (I'm assuming he's not a dentist here), but occasionally leaving the reader wondering if he's reading a dentistry textbook.

Overall the story seems to be more cute than scientific, more slap happy than serious and more whimsical than in depth. It takes on an Alice in Wonderland stance, and messes around with humor in a sarcastic and witty way. While it's not quite surrealistically designed, I'd still consider it similar stylistically and overall to works of Tom Robbins or Douglas Adams. It wasn't the best science fiction novel I've read. But it was fun.

"Prostho Plus" by Piers Anthony
Published by Tom Doherty Associates (a Tor Book)
Copyright © 1973 by Piers Anthony
ISBN 0-812-53116-7

REVIEW: IRIS – "DISCONNECT"

By Austin Govella



Iris create soothing, uplifting, classic synthpop reminiscent of the eighties' glorious heydays, updated enough to be absolutely valid in the 90's. Iris elevates 90's synthpop to the mythic lands previously only occupied by the music we recall from our high school reveries.

They have New Order's constant sense of flow, and the sequences possess the same uplifting burble I remember from the one and only Cause and Effect CD I ever owned. The melodies are excellent, memorable, catchy, and never trite, and Reagan Jones' vocals give me that warm Depeche Mode feeling often enough that I look forward to **Disconnect** with as much joy as I do **Violator**. And the songs are all about love: love lost, love in danger, love at the beginning, at the end, in the middle. It's a wonderful album.

Iris began a few years ago in Austin when Reagan Jones and Matt Morris met each other in an electronic music class and discovered they had similar musical interests: classic 80's electronic pop. Starting as Fading Iris, the duo began playing

covers of their favorite songs at clubs around town before beginning to open for touring acts with a set of newly minted material.

Shorten the name to Iris, tweak a few songs, write a few more, and voila: **Disconnect** was voted best album at the 2001 synthpop awards. I shouldn't have to explain the number of albums Iris beat out, or the general quality at the top of the synthpop heap, but **Disconnect** won.

And it's a good album. I had to listen to it for about a week straight before I really felt I had enough of a handle on it to write a review. To Iris' credit, **Lose in wanting** never got old or stale. I'm still not tired of listening to it. Few albums can be played that often without getting old. Matt Morris's programming is solid. The keys are absolutely catchy and the song-writing is engaging.

Unfortunately, most of the songs still seem to run together. There's not a lot of variety. It's all upbeat, melodic, flowing synthpop. Never slows, gets faster, more aggressive, more atmospheric. A great album, and great songs, don't get me wrong, just not very much variety. It's like the best parts from New Order. I don't want to relate Iris to New Order too much, but I'm constantly reminded of them. The progressions, the breaks, and in all, without a lot of the rough edges New Order usually has. That 's the best part.

Despite not having much variety, there are some standout tracks. The chorus on *Danger is the shame* makes it one of my favorite songs on the album. Emotive vocals by Reagan Jones soar along with the synth pads over percolating rhythms. *Twilight* feels slightly harder than the rest of the album, but not by much. Definitely closer to the continent's typical mix of synthpop and electro by Beborn Beton and DeVision.

Annie, would I lie to you starts out with this amazingly catchy sequence. You've probably heard something similar before, but it really works here, and the pleading in the lyrics really hit home. If I ever meet Annie, I'm totally going to explain everything to her. And that, in essence, explains why this album is so good. It really connects.

If you're into more aggressive, darker, or more political music, then this album isn't for you. A lot of people relegate synthpop to the weaker end of the music spectrum, preferring harder or more artsy sounds, but **Disconnect** is amazing because the emotions on the album really connect. **Disconnect** is an unfettered discussion between the Muse and the audience, and you can hear her singing to you. About love.

AFTERWORD

Let's put I a fork in this issue and call it done. Next month we return heavy to fiction and fantasy, although of course the music will be there. In the latter vein, we have scheduled an interview with Massiv In Mensch and of course a pile of CD reviews from the likes of Noise Process, Slow Lorries, Chirstopher, Braindance, In The Nursery and more.

For those that missed our fiction this month, expect returns by such dark writers as Eric L. Busby, Sue Simpson and our newest writer from the UK – Logan Russell. Illustrations for these stories have been done (and are being done) by Lee Alverson and Maik Shlundt.

Further on in the future we'll have a debut of our newest reviewers, Azriel J. Knight and pixie. We'll debut a new illustrator, PanGia, and hey, maybe even a color cover again some day! Woohoo!

<sigh>

Marcus Pan
October 28, 2001
5:27PM